This is the Original Edition printed in Edinburgh and issued in America by authority of the Publishers.

JULY 1918.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

GENERAL LIBRARY
AUG - 7 1918
UNIV. OF MICH.

NEW YORK:
THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLICATION CO.,
HARR PEARCE, PROP.
249 WEST 13TH STREET.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

Entered at the New York Post-Office as second-class matter.

$3.50 per Year. Canada $3.60 per Year. Single Copy, 35 Cents

The Bombardment *of* Reims

THREE YEARS

From September 3, 1914 to September 3, 1917

By BARR FERREE

A chronological survey of the bombardment of Reims from September 3, 1914 to September 3, 1917, giving the details of the bombardment day by day for the entire period of the siege. This is the first book in any language dealing with the bombardment of Reims in its entirety, and presents a remarkable picture of daily life at Reims under the shells.

The book includes a general introduction on the bombardment, a sketch of the history of the cathedral, churches and other notable buildings, and a history of the destruction of the cathedral and other important structures in Reims.

Price, post-paid, **$2.00**

LEONARD SCOTT PUBLICATION COMPANY

249 West 13th Street, New York

SCHOOLS

New Jersey

College of St. Elizabeth
Convent Station, New Jersey
45 Minutes from New York
Catholic College for Women
Registered by Regents
Standard College Preparatory Courses
Academy of St. Elizabeth
Send for Catalogue

Ohio

Art Academy of Cincinnati
Thoroughly Equipped Art School
Winter and Summer Term
J. H. GEST, Director CINCINNATI

New York

Saint Mary's School
Mount Saint Gabriel
PEEKSKILL-ON-THE-HUDSON, N. Y.
Boarding School for Girls
Under the charge of the Sisters of St. Mary.
New fireproof building beautifully situated.
For catalogues address *The Sister Superior.*

SCHOOLS

California

California Hospital, Los Angeles
School for Nurses The most noted private hospital in this beautiful residence city.

Medical, Surgical, Maternity, Eye and Ear and X-Ray Departments. In the midst of tropical gardens. Booklets free. 1414 South Hope St. Los Angeles. Also a limited number of young men (High School Graduates) admitted to a two years' course.

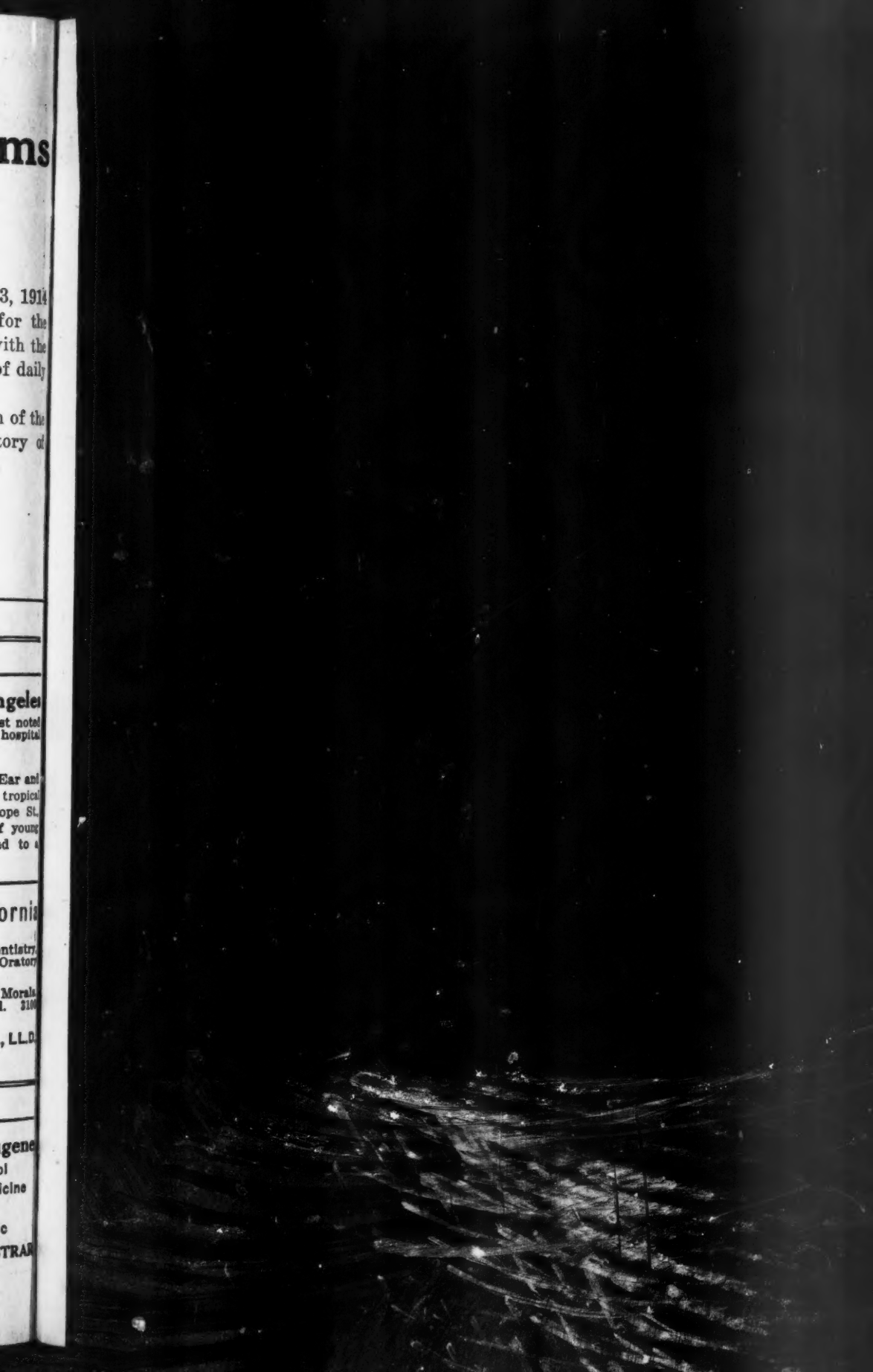
University of Southern California
(Los Angeles)
COLLEGES—Liberal Arts, Medical, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Law, Music, Fine Arts, Oratory and Theology.
HIGH STANDARDS in Scholarship and Morals. Expenses moderate. Climate unexcelled. 2100 Students. Send for Catalogue.
Pres. GEORGE F. BOVARD, A.M., D.D., LL.D.
University Avenue

Oregon

University of Oregon—Eugene

Graduate School	Summer School
College of Liberal Arts	School of Medicine
College of Engineering	School of Law
School of Education	School of Music

Send for Catalog Address THE REGISTRAR



BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXXXIII. JULY 1918. Vol. CCIV.

FIVE MONTHS WITH THE GERMAN RAIDER *WOLF*.

BY F. G. TRAYES.

V.

Life on the *Wolf* was very different to life on the *Hitachi*. To begin with, all the single men of military age were accommodated on the 'tween decks, and slept in hammocks, which they had to sling themselves. The elder men slept in bunks taken from the *Hitachi*, but the quarters of all in the 'tween decks were very restricted; there was no privacy, no convenience, and only a screen divided the European and Japanese quarters. The condition of our fellow-countrymen from the *Hitachi* was the reverse of enviable, though it was a great deal better than that of the crews of captured ships, who were "accommodated" under the poop—where the captains and officers captured had quarters to themselves—and exercised on the poop and well-deck, the port side of which was reserved for the Japanese.

There were between three and four hundred prisoners on board, mostly British, some of whom had been captured in the February previous, as the *Wolf* had left Germany in November 1916, the *Hitachi* being the tenth prize caught. The condition in which these prisoners lived cannot be too strongly condemned. The heat in the Tropics was insufferable, the overcrowding abominable, and on the poop there was hardly room to move. But notwithstanding these hardships the men seemed to be merry and bright, and showed smiling faces to their captors. They had all evidently made up their minds to keep their end up to the last, and were not to be downed by any bad

336352

news or bad treatment the Germans might give them. The *Wolf* of course picked up wireless news every day, printed it, and circulated it throughout the ship in German and English. We did not, however, hear all the news that was picked up, but felt that what we did hear kept us at least a little in touch with the outside world; and we have since been able to verify that, and also to discover that we missed a great deal too.

The accommodation provided for the married couples on the *Wolf* was situated on the port-side upper deck. The "cabins" had been improvised when the first women and civilian prisoners were captured, and other cabins had been carved out as the number of these prisoners increased. The cabins were of course small — there was very little room to spare on the *Wolf*—and, at the best, makeshift contrivances; but it must be admitted that our German captors did all they could to make us as comfortable as possible under the conditions prevailing. The married couples, the Australian military officers, and a few elderly civilians, messed together in the officers' ward-room, quite a tiny saloon, which was placed at our disposal after the officers had finished their meals. The food on the *Wolf* was better cooked than it had been on the *Hitachi*, but there was of course no fresh food of any kind. Even the potatoes were dried, and had to be soaked many hours before being cooked, nor did they much resemble the original article: the same remark applies to the other vegetables. Occasionally our meals satisfied us as far as quantity went, but in the main we left the table feeling that we could with ease have disposed of a great deal more. This was especially the case after breakfast, which consisted of bread and jam only. Each cabin had a German orderly to look after it and wait on the occupants, and a Japanese steward had two or three cabins to look after and clean.

The deck — we were only allowed the port side — was about six feet wide, and part of this was occupied by spare spars. Sailors and officers and prisoners, to fetch their food, were passing along this deck incessantly all day, so it can easily be imagined there was not much room for sitting about on deck-chairs. We were, however, allowed to go down to the well-deck to see our friends during the daytime. They had their meals in the 'tween decks at different times to us, but the food provided was usually just the same. The evenings were the deadliest hours of all on the *Wolf*. At dusk, the order "Schiff abblenden!" resounded all through the ship; sailors came round to put tin plates over all the portholes, and from thence onward throughout the night complete darkness prevailed on

deck, not a glint of light showing anywhere.

When the *Wolf* considered herself in dangerous waters, and when laying mines, even smoking was forbidden on deck. All the cabins had a device by which, directly the door was open, the light went out, only to be relit when the door closed. So it was impossible for any one to leave his cabin with the door open and the light on. There was nothing to do in the evenings after the last meal, which was over before eight o'clock. There was nowhere to sit, except on the dark deck or in the dark cabins, for it was so hot that the cabin doors had to be kept open; and the evenings spent on the *Wolf* were certainly very dreary. Most of us felt we would rather be in jail on shore, for then we should be in no risk of being killed at any moment by our own people, our cells would have been larger than our cabins, and our food possibly not much worse; and our jail would at least have been stationary and not rolling about, though, it must be confessed, the *Wolf* was a good sea boat.

She had been one of the Hansa Line before the war, was about 6000 tons, with a speed of about ten knots at the outside. She had been thoroughly adapted for her work as a raider: had four torpedo-tubes and six guns (said to be 4·7), not to mention machine and smaller guns, none of which could be seen by a passing ship, to which the *Wolf* looked, as she was intended to look, exactly like an innocent tramp. When in action her bulwarks dropped, giving free play to her guns and torpedoes. There was telephone communication between her bridge and every gun and every part of the ship; she carried a huge searchlight; her masts and funnel were telescopic, and she could rig an extra funnel. She carried large supplies of bombs, hand-grenades, rifles, and small arms, had hospitals with two doctors on board; among her crew of more than three hundred were representatives of every trade; she was thoroughly well equipped in every way; the officers had the best and most powerful binoculars, and absolutely nothing seemed to have been forgotten. There were, it was said, only three of the officers who were Imperial Navy men—the Commander, the artillery officer, and the lieutenant in charge of the prisoners. All the other officers and a great many of the crew were from the German mercantile marine, who had travelled with, mixed with, and lived with Englishmen in many parts of the world. To this fact we undoubtedly owed the kindly treatment we received on board—treatment which was infinitely better than we expected to receive. The majority of the officers and men were certainly kindly disposed towards us. There is no doubt, however, the fear that we might be taken by a British cruiser

also had something to do with this treatment; for if we had been treated badly the Germans knew they would have cause to regret it. We were forbidden to talk to the crew, but under cover of the darkness some, a great number of whom spoke English, were only too glad to speak to us. We learned from them that the *Wolf* had been out a year, that they were all very "fed up" with it, tired of the life, tired of the sea, tired of the food, longing to get home, and longing for the war to end. They had, too, no doubts as to how the war would end, and were certain that the *Wolf* would get back to Germany whenever she wished to do so.

They were certain three things would bring them victory — their submarines, the defection of Russia, who would soon be made to conclude peace with Germany, and the fact that in their opinion America had entered the war too late.

The interests of the *Wolf* were now to a certain extent identical with our own that we should not meet an Allied cruiser. A notice was posted in some of our cabins saying in that event the women with their husbands, and some other prisoners, would be put into boats with a white flag, "if weather and other conditions permitted." The other prisoners, however—viz., those under the poop and on the 'tween decks—would have had no chance of being saved. They would all have been battened down under hatches (this, indeed, was done whenever the *Wolf* sighted or captured a ship, and when gun and other drill was carried on), and armed guards supplied with hand-grenades sent among them. Their fate, if the *Wolf* had gone into action, would have been too terrible to contemplate, and it is certain very few of them could have been saved.

The *Wolf*, with a company of over 700 on board, sailed away on a south-westerly course for the next two days, and the usual routine of the ship went on, but no further drills took place. Soon after daybreak on Nov. 10, a sailor locked us all in our cabins, armed guards patrolled the deck, and a short time after an officer came to each cabin and informed us that there was a steamer on the starboard side which the *Wolf* intended to capture. He told us the *Wolf* would fire on her to stop, and provided all of us with cotton wool to insert in our ears while the guns were being fired! We waited for the sound of the guns, but nothing happened, and in about half an hour the same officer came along and said to us, "Don't be fearful, the other ship has stopped and there will be no firing!" Our cabin doors were unlocked, the men on the upper deck were allowed out, the ladies were requested not to show themselves, and another officer ran along the deck saying, "We've catched her, we've catched her—a neutral this time." The "catched" vessel had stopped and was lying very near the *Wolf*. The

name on the stern proclaimed her to be the *Igotz Mendi* of Bilbao, and she was flying the Spanish flag. In a short time a prize crew left the *Wolf* in her motor-launch, and proceeded to the other ship. After they had been aboard her a few minutes, a message came back that the Spanish ship was from Delagoa Bay to Colombo, with a cargo of 5800 tons of coal for the British Admiralty authorities in Ceylon. The chagrin of the Germans may be imagined when they realised that they had captured this ship just too late to save the *Hitachi*. Here was a ship with ample coal, which, had it been captured a few days before, would have enabled the Germans to save the *Hitachi* and take her as a prize to Germany, as they had always desired to do. The *Igotz Mendi* had left Lorenco Marques on November 5, and was due at Colombo on the 22nd.

Before 9 A.M. on the morning of the capture both ships had turned about, the prize now being in command of the Germans, and were going back on the course the *Wolf* had followed since the destruction of the *Hitachi*. Discussion was rife among the prisoners as to what would be done with the new capture, and whether the Commander of the *Wolf* would redeem his promise to transfer the married couples to the "next ship caught."

VI.

The two ships steamed along in company for the next three days, usually stopping towards sunset for communications and sending orders. At daybreak on the 13th both arrived at the Nazareth Bank, and before 9 A.M. were lashed together. On such occasions the *Wolf* never dropped anchor, so that she could be up and away at the slightest warning; the prize ship was always the one to drop anchor. On the previous Tuesday the *Wolf* had been lashed alongside the *Hitachi;* here, on this Tuesday, was the *Wolf* lashed alongside another captured ship in the very same place! Again the daring and coolness of our captors amazed us. Coaling from the *Igotz Mendi* to the *Wolf* at once began, and a wireless installation was immediately rigged up by the Germans on the Spanish ship. Coaling proceeded all that day, and the German officers and crews on both ships were very busy.

On the morning of the 14th orders were given to the married couples on the *Wolf* to get their light baggage ready for transference to the Spanish ship, as she and the *Wolf* might have to separate at any moment. Our heavy baggage would be transferred if time allowed. Evidently something was in the air, some wireless message had been picked up, as the seaplane was being brought up from the 'tween decks and assembled in great haste on the well-deck.

The *Wulfchen* went up about 4.20 and returned about 5.30, and in the interval our heavy luggage had been brought up from the *Wolf's* hold ready to be transhipped to the *Igotz Mendi*. At dusk that evening the married people were transferred to the latter ship. The next morning we were still alongside the *Wolf*, and remained there till the morning of the 17th, our heavy baggage being transhipped in the interval. There had also been transferred the Colonel of the A.A.M.C. and three other men in ill-health. The message the seaplane brought back had evidently been a reassuring one, and we heard a long time afterwards that the *Wolf* had picked up a wireless from a Japanese cruiser, presumably looking for the *Hitachi*, only thirty miles away. Hence the alarm! Unfortunately for us, if this report were true, the cruiser did not turn aside to look in the most obvious place where a ship like the *Wolf* would hide; so once more the *Wolf* was safe.

If only there had been a couple of cruisers, carrying a seaplane or two, in each ocean, the *Wolf* could have been seen, and her career brought to an end long before. The same end would probably have been attained on this occasion, if a wireless message had been sent from Delagoa Bay to Colombo, saying that the *Igotz Mendi* had left the former port for the latter, with 5800 tons of coal on board. The strong wireless installation on the *Wolf*, which picked up every message within a large radius, but of course never sent any, would have picked up this message, and the *Wolf* would probably have risen to the bait, with the result that she could have been caught by an armed vessel sent in search of her on that track. For it must have been known that a raider was out in those waters, as the disappearance of the *Hitachi* could only have been due to the presence of one.

Coaling proceeded without cessation till the morning of the 17th, when the *Wolf* moved off a short distance. Passengers on mail boats familiar with the process of coaling ship at Port Said, Colombo, or any other port, can imagine the condition of these ships after three or four days' incessant coaling day and night. The appearance of the *Igotz Mendi* was meanwhile undergoing another change. When captured she was painted white, and had a buff funnel, with her Company's distinguishing mark. She was now painted the Allied grey colour, and when her sides and funnel had been transformed, the two ships sailed away, and on the evening of the 17th, after final orders and instructions had been given, parted company. For some days after this painting was the order of the day on the Spanish ship, which was now grey on every part visible.

The captain of the Spanish ship was relieved of his duties —and also of his cabin, which the German captain had an-

nexed, leaving the owner thereof the chart-room to sleep in. He was naturally very chagrined at his ill-fortune, especially as he said he had been told by the Consul at Lorenco Marques that the course between there and Colombo was quite clear, and had not even been informed of the disappearance of the *Hitachi*, though she had been overdue at Delagoa Bay about a month. Consequently he had been showing his navigation lights at sea, and without them he would probably not have been seen, as it was about 1 A.M. when the *Wolf* picked him up. The remaining Spanish officers took their watch on the bridge, always with a member of the prize crew in attendance; the Spanish engineers remained in charge of the engine-room, again with a German always present, and the Spanish crew remained on duty as before. There was a prize crew of nine Germans on board, the Captain, Lieutenant Rose, who had also been in charge of the *Hitachi* after her capture, and the First Officer, who had also filled that post on the *Hitachi*, being the only officers.

The *Igotz Mendi* had been completed in 1916, and was a ship admirably fitted for her purpose, which, however, was not that of carrying passengers. Her decks were of iron, scorchingly hot in the tropics, and icy cold in northern latitudes. There was no place sheltered from the sun in which to sit on deck, and the small awnings which were spasmodically rigged up were quite insufficient for the purpose. There were no cabins except those provided for the officers, who generously gave them up to the married couples on board, taking quarters much more crowded and much less desirable. The cabins were quite suitable for one occupant each, but very cramped for two, the one occupied by my wife and myself being only seven and a half feet square. Each contained one bunk and one settee, the latter being a sleeping-place far from comfortable, as it was only 5½ feet long by about 20 inches wide, and the floor space was very narrow and restricted. There were four cabins, two on each side of a narrow alleyway about two feet wide, while one married couple occupied the chief engineer's cabin further aft, quite a roomy apartment. The four men above mentioned occupied a space under the poop; it could not be dignified by the name of cabin. It was very small, only one occupant could dress at a time, and immediately in front of it was a reeking pig-sty with three full-sized occupants. The passage to it from the saloon on the upper deck was often a perilous one in rough weather and in the dark, for there was never any light showing on board at night during the whole cruise. This, then, was to be our home for the next few months. We did not know for how long, but we regarded the prospect with a certain amount of equanimity, as the ship was unarmed,

and we knew we should not be fired on by a hostile cruiser, as might have been the case if we had remained on the *Wolf*. There was on board a certain amount of live stock; a couple of cows, each had a calf born on board; these all met the usual fate of such things on appropriate occasions.

When we arrived on the Spanish boat we were served with meals at the times to which the Spanish officers had been accustomed — *i.e.*, breakfast at 9 and supper at 4; but these times were soon afterwards changed to breakfast at 8.30, tiffin 12.30, and supper 5.30. We were lucky to get fresh food for some days. But this soon came to an end, though the stock of muscatels, a quince preserve called membrillo, and Spanish wine lasted very much longer.

For many days after we parted company with the *Wolf* we ambled and dawdled through the sea on a south-westerly course, sometimes stopping altogether for an hour or two, sometimes for half a day, sometimes for a whole day.

On the afternoon of the 23rd the Germans became very agitated at the sight of smoke on the horizon. At first we all thought it was the *Wolf*, but before long we could see two columns of smoke, evidently coming from steamers travelling together. We at once changed our course, and manœuvred at full speed in such a way that we quickly got out of sight of the smoke. Then we resumed our original course, and the German captain came down from the bridge and told us there was no relief for us yet. We all felt that if the *Hitachi* had only avoided distant smoke as the German captain had done, we need never have made the acquaintance of the *Wolf*.

On the 24th we again met the *Wolf* in the evening. Whenever the *Wolf* had an appointment to meet her prize at a certain time and place, the prize always hoisted recognition signals directly she saw the *Wolf* on the horizon. These were made of wicker, and varied in shape on different occasions.

We were now well to the south of Africa, in the roaring forties; we saw many schools of whales, and albatrosses accompanied us for several days. By December 1 we had begun to steer N.W., and on the 3rd the captain informed us we were the nearest we should ever be to Cape Town, the port to which I had set out. We were then 150 miles off. We met the *Wolf* again on the 5th, and travelled in her company during the remainder of that day and the next two, stopping, as usual, for communication and the sending of stores to us in the evenings just before sunset. The *Wolf* on this occasion told us she had sunk the American sailing vessel *John H. Kirby*, from America to East London, with a cargo of 400 motor-cars on board, when two days from her destination, the officers and crew being taken on board the *Wolf*.

The evening of December 7

was the last occasion we saw the *Wolf* for many days. The two ships now shaped a course for the Brazilian island of Trinidad, where it was understood the *Wolf* would coal from her prize, and with her spend the Christmas holiday.

VII.

It must not be supposed that the life of the prisoners on the *Igotz Mendi* in any way approximated to that of passengers on an ordinary passenger ship. To begin with, there were no ship's servants to wait on us with the exception of the Spanish steward, a youth who waited at table and excelled in breaking ship's crockery. If the cabins were to be kept clean, we had to do it ourselves. Every morning saw the occupants sweeping out and cleaning up their cabins, as no ship's servant ever entered them. The water supply was very limited, and had to be fetched by ourselves —no matter what the weather —sometimes from the forepeak, and sometimes from a pump near the ship's galley. Washing water and drinking water were served out twice a day, at 8 A.M. and 4 P.M., an ordinary water-can being the allowance of the former, and a water-bottle that of the latter. The supply of washing water was very inadequate, and no hot water was ever available. After washing ourselves, we had to wash our clothes in the same water—for there was of course no laundry on board —and then the cabin floor after that. It was impossible to have a proper bath all the time we were on board. There was no water supply in the bathroom, and it was kept in an extremely dirty condition. The saloon, about 18 feet square, in which all the meals were served in two sittings, was very rarely clean, and the habits of the captain's pup did not improve matters, while the table appointments were often disgusting. The tablecloth was filthy after the first meal or so, thanks to the rolling of the ship, but was only changed twice, sometimes only once, a week. Cups were used without saucers, and spoons gradually disappeared, so that towards the end one had to suffice between four or five persons.

We got thoroughly sick of the food provided, but the German officers and crew had just the same. The *Hitachi* had been carrying 10,000 cases of canned crab to England. A great part of this was saved and divided between the *Wolf* and her prize. None of us ever want to see or hear of this commodity again; we were fed on it till most of us loathed it, though when it was served we perforce had to eat it or dry bread, and several of us chose the latter. Bully beef, every variety of bean, dried vegetables, bean soup, dried fish that audibly announced its advent to the table, and pea-

soup we got just as sick of, till, long before the end, all the food served nauseated us. Tea, sometimes made in a coffee-pot, sometimes even with salt water, was the usual hot drink provided, but coffee was for some time available once a day. We owe a great debt to one of our fellow-prisoners, a ship's cook from one of the other captured ships, who in return for his offer to work as baker was promised his liberty, which fortunately he has now secured, though no thanks to the Germans. He baked, under the most difficult conditions, extraordinarily good bread, and over and over again we should have gone without food but for this.

Mention has been made of the ship's rolling. Her capacity for this was incredible—in the smoothest sea, whether stopped or under steam, she rolled heavily from side to side, and caused great discomfort and inconvenience to all on board. The remark, "The Mendi roll, fresh every day for every meal, for breakfast, dinner, and tea," was made by some one at almost every meal-time, as we clutched at our food, gliding or jumping from end to end of the saloon table, accompanied by the smashing of crockery and upsetting of liquids and soup. Even the captain was astonished at the rolling of the ship, as he might well be, when one night he, in common with most of us, was flung out of his berth. No ship ever rolled like it!

As may be imagined, there was not much to do on board. The few books we had between us were passed round and read over and over again. Some were also sent over from the *Wolf* for us. Card games of various kinds also helped to pass the time, which nevertheless dragged very heavily.

We next picked up the *Wolf* on the afternoon of Dec. 19, and the two ships proceeded on parallel courses for Trinidad, but about 8 P.M. both turned sharply round and doubled on their tracks, proceeding on a south-easterly course at full speed. We learned the reason for this the next day. We had been proceeding towards Trinidad, where German raiders had previously coaled and hidden; but Brazil was now in the war, so that hole was stopped, and the *Wolf* had intercepted a wireless from the commander of a Brazilian cruiser to the garrison on Trinidad. Hence her rapid flight! But for that wireless message the *Wolf* would have walked right into the trap, and we should have been free within twelve hours from the time the message was picked up.

Once again, wireless had been our undoing. The *Hitachi* had wirelessed the hour of her arrival at, and departure from, Singapore and Colombo; the *Wolf* of course had picked up the messages and was ready waiting for her. One other ship, if not more, was caught in just the same way. The *Matunga* had wirelessed, not even in code, her departure, with the nature of her cargo, from Sydney to New Guinea,

and she wirelessed again when within a few hours of her destination. The *Wolf* waited for her, informed her that she had on board just the cargo the *Wolf* needed, captured, and afterwards sunk her. The *Wolf's* success in capturing ships and evading hostile cruisers was certainly due to her intercepting apparently indiscriminate wirelessing between ships and between ships and shore—at one time in the Indian Ocean the *Wolf* was picking up news in four languages—and to her seaplane, which enabled her to scout thoroughly and to spot an enemy ship long before she could have been seen.

The two ships proceeded on their new course at full speed for the next two days. On the 21st they slowed down, hoping to coal in the open sea. The next day both ships stopped, but the condition of the sea would not admit of coaling; we were then said to be about 700 miles E. of Monte Video. It was of course a disappointment to the Germans that they were prevented from coaling and spending their Christmas under the shelter of Trinidad; but it became quite clear that all the holes for German raiders in this part of the ocean had now been stopped, and that they would have to coal in the open sea or not at all. But the disappointment was mitigated by other wireless news received. The Commander of the *Wolf* called all his men together, and harangued them to the effect that the latest news was that Russia and Roumania were now out of the war, having given in to Germany, that the war would certainly be over in six months, and that the *Wolf* would then go home in safety to a victorious, grateful, and appreciative Fatherland. Some such spur as this was necessary to the men, who were getting very discontented with the length of the cruise and conditions prevailing, notably the monotony of the food and threatened shortage of food and drink and tobacco. Christmas Eve was still too rough for the ships to tie up alongside, and our Christmas the next day was the reverse of merry. One cow and three pigs had been killed for the Christmas feast, but they did not go far between nearly 800 people, and all the prisoners, at least, were glad when the dismal farce of Christmas under such conditions was over.

The weather on Boxing Day was only a little more favourable than that on Christmas Day, but the Germans decided to wait no longer to coal the *Wolf*. They had previously conveyed water to our ship from the *Wolf* in boats. The same method of transferring coal was discussed, but that idea was abandoned. At 5 P.M. she tied up alongside us. She bumped into us with considerable force when she came up, and not many of us on board the *Igotz Mendi* will ever forget that night. Both ships were rolling heavily and repeatedly bumping into each

other, each ship quivering from end to end, and the funnel of the *Igotz Mendi* was visibly shaking at every fresh collision. Sleep was impossible for any one on our boat; in fact many feared to turn in at all, as they thought some of the plates might be stove in. The next day was no better, but rather worse. About 6 P.M. there was a great crash, which alarmed all; it was due to the *Wolf* crashing into and completely smashing part of the bridge of our ship. This was enough for the Germans. They decided to suspend operations, and at 7 P.M. the *Wolf* sheered off, having coaled 600 tons in twenty-five hours. The coaling process had severely damaged the *Wolf*, many of whose plates were badly dented. We had lost eighteen large fenders between the ships, and the *Wolf* was leaking to the extent of twelve tons an hour. The *Igotz Mendi* had come off better. None of her plates were dented, she was making no water, and the only visible signs of damage to her were many twisted and bent stanchions on the port side that met the *Wolf*.

We had been allowed to send letters for Christmas—censored, of course, by the Germans — to our *Hitachi* friends on the *Wolf;* and when the two ships were alongside we were allowed to speak to them, though conversation under such conditions was very difficult, as one minute our friends would be several feet above us and the next below us, with the rolling of the ship; and the noise of the coaling, shouting of orders, and roaring of the water between the ships was deafening.

VIII.

We had been encouraged by the Germans to think—they had in fact definitely told us—that the *Igotz Mendi* with us on board was to be sent to Spain when the Germans released her. On December 29, all of which and the previous day, together with many succeeding days, were spent in transferring our cargo coal to our bunkers, the Germans on our ship and on the *Wolf* ostentatiously bade each other good-bye, and letters from prisoners on the *Wolf* were brought to us to post in Spain when we landed. The idea of the *Wolf* remaining out till the war was over in six months was abandoned, and we were told the *Wolf* would now go home to Germany. Why we were told this, the first time we had been informed of the *Wolf's* plans, we never knew, except that it might have been an excuse to keep dragging us over the seas, for the *Wolf* would never have allowed us to get ashore before she reached Germany. Then we really began to think we were going to be landed in Spain, and the news raised the spirits

of all of us. Those who had been learning Spanish before now did so with redoubled energy, and it seemed as if the end of our cruise, with our freedom, was really in sight, especially as the captain had told some of us on the 16th that in six weeks our captivity would be over. Some of us, however, still inclined to the belief that the Germans would release the ship and order her back to Java or Colombo or Calcutta, while others believed we should ultimately be landed in Dutch Guiana or Mexico.

On the last day of the year a rumour went round the ship that we should be taken far north to a point from which the *Wolf* could get to Germany before we could reach Spain. That, in the opinion of most of us, put an end to the prospects of landing in Spain. The Germans were not likely to run any risk of our giving information, and after the ships had separated there was still a chance of the prize being intercepted by an Allied cruiser before the *Wolf* got home, and if that had happened the *Wolf's* goose would have been cooked indeed. So Spain looked very improbable. I approached the captain on the last day of the year and spoke to him on the point. He confirmed the rumour. I made a vigorous, though I knew it would be quite a useless, protest against this scheme. I pointed out that the ship, which by then would be almost empty, was not a suitable one in which to carry women and children into the North Atlantic in mid-winter gales, and that people who had spent many years in the tropics would not be able to stand such weather, unprovided as they were with winter clothing; also that in case of distress we could call for no help, as our wireless would only receive and not send messages. The captain brushed these complaints aside, saying the ship was in good trim and could stand any weather, that it would only be intensely cold on a very few days, that arrangements would be made that we should suffer as little from the cold as possible, and that there was no great likelihood of our being in distress.

I then pointed out to him that our own Government prohibited our women from travelling through the submarine zone at all, but that he proposed to send them through it twice, and to give us a double dose of the North Atlantic at the very worst time of the year. He replied that going north we should go nowhere near the submarine zone—he was just as anxious to avoid submarines as we were—and when we parted, far up in the North Atlantic, the *Igotz Mendi* would be given a "submarine pass" guaranteeing her safety from attack by the U-boats, and special lights to burn at night. I replied that I failed to see the use of a "submarine pass," as U-boats torpedoed at sight, and would not trouble to ask for a pass.

He replied by asking me if I had ever heard of a neutral boat being torpedoed without warning. I answered that I had heard of such being done many times, and reminded him that the *Igotz Mendi* was painted the Allied grey colour, and therefore would not be recognised as a neutral, but regarded by the U-boats as an enemy ship. He ended the interview by saying that he was carrying out the orders of the *Wolf's* commander, and had no choice but to obey. This news of the *Wolf's* intentions angered us all, and we all felt that there was very little chance of ever seeing land again, unless an Allied cruiser came to our aid. We regarded this plan of the Germans as a deliberate one to sink us and the ship when they had got all they wanted out of her.

The two ships had parted on the evening of the 30th, both going north, and we did not see the *Wolf* again till the morning of January 4. She was then seen to be overhauling a ship on the horizon. We followed at a short distance, and before long saw a ship in full sail. The *Wolf* approached her, spoke her, and to our intense astonishment released her. It seemed too good to be true that the *Wolf* would leave any ship she met quite unmolested, but so it was—for a short time. It was between ten and eleven when the *Wolf* and her prize proceeded on their original course, and the sailing ship crossed our course astern. About 1.30 P.M., however, we changed our course and turned about. We were all mystified as to what was going to happen, until we saw a sail on the horizon. The *Wolf's* purpose was evident then. She was going back to destroy the ship whose existence she had forgiven in the morning. Imagine the feelings of the crew of her prey, seeing the *Wolf* bearing down on her in the morning, their suspense as to their fate and that of their ship, their joy at their release, and—here was the *Wolf* again. What would their fate be now? The *Wolf* did not leave them long in doubt. She came up to her prize about 5 P.M. She was a four-masted barque in full sail, and made a beautiful picture as she lay bathed in floods of golden light from the setting sun. Before dark, however, preparations had begun to remove her officers and crew and provisions,—she was in ballast from the Cape to S. America,—and this was completed in a few hours. We were invited by the Germans to stay up and see the end. We waited up till past eleven and saw lights flitting about the doomed ship, as the German sailors were removing some things, making fast others, and placing the bombs to blow her up. But none waited up for the end, which we heard took place after midnight. The ship first canted over, her sails resting on the water, righted herself, and then slowly disappeared. It was a beautiful moonlight night for the commission of so dark a deed. The Germans afterwards told us that when the *Wolf* first spoke

the barque, she gave her name and said she was a Norwegian ship, and so was released. The *Wolf*, they said, had afterwards discovered from her shipping register that she was British-owned before the war, and therefore to be destroyed.

We had hoped our captors might have put us all on the sailing-ship and sent us off on her to S. America, as the *Wolf* would have been well away and out of danger before we could have got ashore. But they did not entertain any such idea. Some of us requested that the lifeboats of the sailing-ship might be sent over to the *Igotz Mendi*, as we had only two lifeboats, a couple of small dinghies, and an improvised raft, not sufficient for sixty-five people; but the Germans would not send us these lifeboats, as they said they were leaky!

We remained in company of the *Wolf* for the next few days, and at 7 P.M. on the 10th the *Wolf* again came alongside in the open sea and coaled from us till 4 P.M. on the next day. Conditions were slightly better than on the previous occasion, but still quite sufficiently unpleasant. More fenders were lost, and the *Wolf* was further damaged, and the great uproar caused by the winches going all night, the periodic emptying of ashes, dragged in iron buckets over the iron decks, the shifting of coal from the bunkers immediately underneath our cabins, and the constant bumping of the ships, made sleep quite out of the question, and we were very glad indeed when the *Wolf* sheered off. On this occasion the way in which she came alongside and sheered off was a beautiful piece of seamanship. On the 11th we again saw and spoke to our *Hitachi* friends on the *Wolf*—the last opportunity we had of speaking to them. On the next day we crossed the Equator, and then for some days we saw the *Wolf* no more.

On January 14 I approached the captain and asked him if the Germans on the *Wolf*, when they got to Germany, would have any means of finding out whether we on the *Igotz Mendi* had safely arrived in Spain. He replied that they would. I then asked him whether, if we were all lost on the *Igotz Mendi* on her return voyage to Spain, the German Government would inform the British Government of our fate. He replied that would certainly be done. I further asked him whether we might send letters for the *Wolf* to have posted in Germany in the event of our not arriving in Spain. Most of us had to settle up our affairs in some way in case we might be lost at sea, and wished to write farewell letters to our home people. The captain said this might also be done, and the letters would not be posted if the *Igotz Mendi*, with us on board, got back safely to Spain. "But," he added, "we have changed our plans, and now intend that you shall be landed in Norway. It will be safer for you all, and you will not have to risk meeting our submarines

in the Atlantic again. When we arrive in Norwegian waters the German prize crew will be taken off this ship after the *Wolf* has got home, the ship will be handed over to the Spaniards, and you will all be landed in Norway, from where you can easily make your way to England." Here was quite a new plan — how much truth there was in this declaration will be seen hereafter. From now onwards definite promises began to be made to us concerning the end of our captivity—"in a month you'll be free"; "the next full moon will be the last you will see at sea," &c.

We were, of course, proceeding north every day, keeping in mid-Atlantic, always well off the trade-routes, though of course we crossed some on our way north. We did not meet the *Wolf* on the 22nd, as our Captain evidently expected to do, and we waited about for her several hours. But next day we did meet her, and we were then told that in eighteen days we should be ashore. We were then about 30° N., and we parted from the *Wolf* the same afternoon. It was always a great relief to us all when we parted from her keeping our ship's company of prisoners intact. For the men amongst us feared we might all be put upon the *Wolf* to be taken to Germany, leaving our wives on the *Igotz Mendi*. This, so we had been told, had been the intention of the *Wolf's* commander when the prisoners were first put on the Spanish boat. He had ordered that only women and prisoners above sixty and under sixteen should be put on the *Igotz Mendi;* but the German doctor, a humane and kindly man, would have nothing to do with this plan, and declared he would not be responsible for the health of the women if this were done. So we owe it to him that wives were not separated from their husbands during this anxious time, as the Commander of the *Wolf* had inhumanly suggested.

IX.

A last effort was made to persuade the captain to ask the *Wolf's* commander to release the Spanish ship here, take all the prize crew off, and send us back to Cape Town, for a suspicion began to grow in our minds that Germany and nowhere else was the destination intended for us. But our captain would not listen to this suggestion, and said he was sure that the Spanish captain would not go back to Cape Town even if he promised to do so.

On the next day, January 24, relief seemed nearer than it had done since our capture, four months before. I was sitting on the starboard deck, when suddenly I saw coming up out of the mist, close to our starboard bow, what looked like a

cruiser with four funnels. The Spanish officer on the bridge had apparently not seen it, neither apparently had the German sailor, if indeed he was even on the bridge at that moment. I rushed to inform the American sailing-ship captain of my discovery, and he confirmed my opinion that it was a four-funnelled warship. The Germans were by this time fully alarmed, and slowed down a little; the captain, evidently also thinking that the vessel was a cruiser, went to his cabin to dispose of the ship's papers, the crew got into their best uniform to surrender, and it looked as if help were at hand at last. We were all out on deck, delighted beyond words, and saw the ship—it must be remembered that it was a very misty day—resolve itself into two two-funnelled ships, apparently transports, one seemingly in distress and the other standing by. Soon, however, they proceeded on their course and crossed our bows fairly close. We were then all ordered to our cabins, and we saw the two ships steam off to the westward without having spoken us or given any evidence of having seen us at all.

It was a most bitter disappointment, comparable to that of shipwrecked sailors on a desert island watching a ship expected to deliver them pass out of sight. But it was a great relief to the Germans. We never discovered what ships they were, but the American said he believed them to be American transports and that each mounted a gun.

In the middle of the excitement the Spanish chief mate had rushed on to the bridge into the wireless room, and while the wireless operator was out of the room or his attention had been diverted, he took from their place all the six or eight bombs on board and threw them overboard. It was a plucky act, for had he been discovered by the armed sentry while doing it, he would undoubtedly have been shot on the spot. On the next day an inquiry was held as to the disappearance of the bombs, which would of course have been used to sink the ship, and the chief mate owned up. He said that he did it for the sake of the women and children on board; as the sea was rough their lives would have been in danger if they had been put in the lifeboats when the ship was bombed. He was confined to his cabin for the rest of the voyage, and later sentenced by the Commander of the *Wolf* to three years' imprisonment in Germany and a fine of 2000 marks. From this time all the Spanish officers were relieved of their duties.

The Germans had told us that, in the case of the prize being captured while the weather was rough, the ship would not be bombed or sunk, as they had no desire to endanger the lives of the women and children amongst us. In fact, so they said, the ship would not be bombed under any conditions when once the *Wolf* had got all the coal she

in the Atlantic again. When we arrive in Norwegian waters the German prize crew will be taken off this ship after the *Wolf* has got home, the ship will be handed over to the Spaniards, and you will all be landed in Norway, from where you can easily make your way to England." Here was quite a new plan — how much truth there was in this declaration will be seen hereafter. From now onwards definite promises began to be made to us concerning the end of our captivity—"in a month you'll be free"; "the next full moon will be the last you will see at sea," &c.

We were, of course, proceeding north every day, keeping in mid-Atlantic, always well off the trade-routes, though of course we crossed some on our way north. We did not meet the *Wolf* on the 22nd, as our Captain evidently expected to do, and we waited about for her several hours. But next day we did meet her, and we were then told that in eighteen days we should be ashore. We were then about 30° N., and we parted from the *Wolf* the same afternoon. It was always a great relief to us all when we parted from her keeping our ship's company of prisoners intact. For the men amongst us feared we might all be put upon the *Wolf* to be taken to Germany, leaving our wives on the *Igotz Mendi*. This, so we had been told, had been the intention of the *Wolf's* commander when the prisoners were first put on the Spanish boat. He had ordered that only women and prisoners above sixty and under sixteen should be put on the *Igotz Mendi;* but the German doctor, a humane and kindly man, would have nothing to do with this plan, and declared he would not be responsible for the health of the women if this were done. So we owe it to him that wives were not separated from their husbands during this anxious time, as the Commander of the *Wolf* had inhumanly suggested.

IX.

A last effort was made to persuade the captain to ask the *Wolf's* commander to release the Spanish ship here, take all the prize crew off, and send us back to Cape Town, for a suspicion began to grow in our minds that Germany and nowhere else was the destination intended for us. But our captain would not listen to this suggestion, and said he was sure that the Spanish captain would not go back to Cape Town even if he promised to do so.

On the next day, January 24, relief seemed nearer than it had done since our capture, four months before. I was sitting on the starboard deck, when suddenly I saw coming up out of the mist, close to our starboard bow, what looked like a

cruiser with four funnels. The Spanish officer on the bridge had apparently not seen it, neither apparently had the German sailor, if indeed he was even on the bridge at that moment. I rushed to inform the American sailing-ship captain of my discovery, and he confirmed my opinion that it was a four-funnelled warship. The Germans were by this time fully alarmed, and slowed down a little; the captain, evidently also thinking that the vessel was a cruiser, went to his cabin to dispose of the ship's papers, the crew got into their best uniform to surrender, and it looked as if help were at hand at last. We were all out on deck, delighted beyond words, and saw the ship—it must be remembered that it was a very misty day—resolve itself into two two-funnelled ships, apparently transports, one seemingly in distress and the other standing by. Soon, however, they proceeded on their course and crossed our bows fairly close. We were then all ordered to our cabins, and we saw the two ships steam off to the westward without having spoken us or given any evidence of having seen us at all.

It was a most bitter disappointment, comparable to that of shipwrecked sailors on a desert island watching a ship expected to deliver them pass out of sight. But it was a great relief to the Germans. We never discovered what ships they were, but the American said he believed them to be American transports and that each mounted a gun.

In the middle of the excitement the Spanish chief mate had rushed on to the bridge into the wireless room, and while the wireless operator was out of the room or his attention had been diverted, he took from their place all the six or eight bombs on board and threw them overboard. It was a plucky act, for had he been discovered by the armed sentry while doing it, he would undoubtedly have been shot on the spot. On the next day an inquiry was held as to the disappearance of the bombs, which would of course have been used to sink the ship, and the chief mate owned up. He said that he did it for the sake of the women and children on board; as the sea was rough their lives would have been in danger if they had been put in the lifeboats when the ship was bombed. He was confined to his cabin for the rest of the voyage, and later sentenced by the Commander of the *Wolf* to three years' imprisonment in Germany and a fine of 2000 marks. From this time all the Spanish officers were relieved of their duties.

The Germans had told us that, in the case of the prize being captured while the weather was rough, the ship would not be bombed or sunk, as they had no desire to endanger the lives of the women and children amongst us. In fact, so they said, the ship would not be bombed under any conditions when once the *Wolf* had got all the coal she

wanted. Nevertheless, the next time we met the *Wolf* a new supply of bombs was put on board our ship. At the same time, an extra lieutenant came aboard, additional neutrals were sent over to help work the ship, and the prize crew was increased from nine to nineteen.

The Kaiser's birthday, which fell on a Sunday, was marked by a most terrific storm. The seas were between 30 and 40 feet high, and it seemed impossible that the ship could live. However, notwithstanding terrible rolling, she shipped very little water, though all of the prisoners were alarmed at the rough weather and the rolling of the ship. From this day onwards we lived in a condition of great misery, and death stared us in the face many times. It got colder and colder every day for a considerable time; the food got worse and worse and we were on short rations, the ship became more and more dirty, smokes ran short—only some ancient dusty shag brought from Germany by the *Wolf* and some virulent native tobacco from New Guinea remained—and conditions generally became almost beyond endurance. Darkness fell very early in these far northern latitudes, and the long nights were very dreary and miserable. From this time onwards we had very dirty weather, and the worst storms seemingly on Sundays. On February 5 we again met the *Wolf*—we had sighted her on the evening of the 4th, but it was too rough then to communicate. With the *Wolf's* usual luck the weather moderated next day, and the ships stopped. Just as the Germans on land always seemed to get the weather they wanted, so they were equally favoured at sea. This was noticed over and over again.

Those who had written letters to be sent on the *Wolf* sent them over on this day, and the Spanish chief mate expected to be sent on the *Wolf*, as we might not meet her again. Luckily for him, however, he was not transferred, and neither he nor we ever saw the *Wolf* again after the morning of February 6.

We heard from the *Wolf* that she was getting very short of food, and that there was much sickness, including many cases of scurvy, on board.

The next day we entered the Arctic circle. The cold was intense, the temperature falling as low as 14° F. in some of our cabins. There was no heating apparatus on the ship, with the exception of a couple of small heating pipes in the saloon. The cabins were icy cold. The curtains froze to the ports, all the cabin roofs leaked, it was impossible to keep the floors and bedding dry, and in our cabin, in addition, we had water constantly flowing and swishing backwards and forwards between the iron deck of the ship and the wooden floor of the cabin. On many nights we emptied five or six buckets full of icy water from where it accumulated under the

settee which had to be used as a bed. At last I persuaded the captain to allow one of the sailors to drill a hole in the side of the cabin, so that the water could have an outlet on to the deck. The ports of the cabins had all long ago been painted black, in order that no light might show through at night. We had to sit in these cold and dark cabins during the day, and often there was nowhere else to sit, as the weather prevented us from being on deck, which was frequently covered with frost and snow. The electric light was on for only a limited time each day, so, as the ports could not be opened, it being far too cold, we asked and obtained permission to scratch a little of the paint off the ports in our cabin. This made things a trifle more bearable, but it can easily be imagined how people who had been living in tropical climates for many years fared under such conditions. It was nothing short of cruel to expose women and children to this after they had been dragged in captivity over the seas for many months. The captain had ordered a part of the bunkers to be cleared, so that the prisoners might sit there in the cold weather. But the place was so dirty and uncomfortable, and difficult of access, in addition to being in darkness and quite unprovided with seats, that most of the prisoners preferred the crowded little saloon.

On the morning of February 7 we for the first time encountered ice-floes, when attempting the Northern passage between Greenland and Iceland. About 11 A.M. we stopped and hooted for the *Wolf*, as a fog had come on. We waited for some hours in the ice, but no answering signal came; so the captain decided to turn back, as he thought it impossible to force a way through the ice. We therefore went back again on our course, the captain hoping that the wind would change and cease blowing the ice-floes from off the shores of Greenland. After a day or two on this course we resumed our attempt to go to the north of Iceland, evidently to escape the attention of the British ships which the Germans expected to encounter between the south of Iceland and the Faroes. But before long it became evident that ice was still about, and in the darkness of the early morning of February 11 we bumped heavily against ice several times. This time the attempt to go through the Northern passage was abandoned, and the ship turned round to try her luck in the passage which was not expected to be so free from British attentions.

To add to our miseries, the captain told us on February 11, *for the first time*, that it was, and always had been, the intention to take us on the *Igotz Mendi* to Germany, there to be interned in civilian prisoners' camps. He told us, too, that the women and those of the men over military age would be released at once;

but we all declined to believe anything else our captors told us, as they had deliberately and repeatedly deceived us by assuring us at various times they were going to land us in Spain or Norway, or some other neutral country. At daylight on the 11th we were still among ice-floes, but going away from instead of meeting them; and on that morning we saw in the distance the coast of Iceland, the first land that we had seen since the Maldive Islands a week after our capture—*i.e.*, more than four months before.

We now shaped a course for the coast of Norway, keeping to the north of the Faroes, and on Sunday the 17th we again ran into a very heavy storm. Ever since the storm on the 27th of the month before, the propeller had been constantly racing and sending shudders through the ship from stem to stern. On this day this feature, which was always disconcerting and to a certain extent alarming, became more marked, and the thud with which the ship met the seas more and more loud—so loud, indeed, that on one occasion the captain thought we had struck a mine, and rushed from the saloon to the bridge to ascertain what damage had been done. The captain and crew had by this time become very anxious as to the fate of the *Wolf*, as no news had been received concerning her. Day after day on which the captain told us he expected news went by without any being received. But on the evening of the 19th the captain informed us that he had picked up a wireless message announcing the safe arrival of the *Wolf* at a German port. The Germans seemed singularly little elated at the news, and hardly ever mentioned the subject again after that evening. This was so different to what we had expected, that most of the prisoners did not believe the *Wolf* had got home.

X.

The Germans were now getting very anxious as they approached the blockade zone. They affected, however, to believe that there was no blockade, and that there was no need of one now that America was in the war. "No one will trade with us," they said; "accordingly there is no need for a blockade." Nevertheless they were at great pains to keep as far as possible from any place in which British ships might appear. But unfortunately not one did appear, here or anywhere else, to rescue us, although we felt certain in our own minds that some of our ships would be present and save us in these parts of the seas, which we believed were regularly patrolled. It was a bitter disappointment to us that we saw none. But

as some of the passengers remarked to the captain, "If there is no blockade, as the Germans say, why haven't you more raiders out, instead of only one, and why have so few been able to come out?" There was of course no answer to this! The captain further remarked that even if there were a blockade it would always be possible to get through it at the week-end, as all the British blockading fleet returned to port for that time! The *Wolf*, he said, came out through the blockade at the week-end, and got home through the blockade at the week-end. It was quite simple, we were to do the same!

On the 20th we were off Bergen and saw the coast in the distance, the next day we were nearer the coast, and on that night we encountered the greatest storm we experienced on the cruise. The wind was terrific, huge seas broke over the ship, the alleyway outside the cabins was awash all the night, and the water even invaded the saloon to a small extent. Articles and receptacles for water that had not been made absolutely fast in the cabins were tossed about; many cabins were drenched and running with water. The noise of the wind howling and the seas breaking on the deck was so alarming to those in the outside cabins that they assembled in the saloon, as sleep was out of the question. The ship, though steaming full speed, made no progress that night, but went back, and in three days, the 19th, 20th, and 21st, made only 100 knots. After such stormy nights, and in such bitter temperature, a breakfast of cold canned crab, or dry bread with sugar, or rice and hot water plus a very little gravy, or bread and much-watered condensed milk, was not very nourishing or satisfying, but very often that was all we had. This weather of course pleased the German captain, who said that no enemy ship would or could board him under such conditions. In fact, he said no enemy vessel would be out of port in such storms! They alone were sufficiently terrifying to the landsmen amongst us; the prospect of having to take to the lifeboats if the Germans took it into their head to sink the vessel if she were sighted by an enemy ship added to the fears of all of us. There had been no boat-drill, and the lifeboat accommodation was hopelessly inadequate for more than eighty people now on board. It is certain, with the mixed crew, that there would have been a savage fight for the boats. The prospect, looked at from any point of view, was alarming, and one of the greatest anxiety for us all.

On February 22 we rounded the Naze. Here, we thought, we should certainly come across some British vessel. But that day and the next passed—it seemed as if we too were to get in during the week-end!—and hope of rescue disappeared. The bearing of the Germans towards us became markedly changed. We were almost in

their clutches now, the arrival at Kiel and transference to Ruhleben were openly talked of, and our captors showed decided inclination to jeer at us and our misfortunes. We were told that all diaries, if we had kept them, must be destroyed, or we should be severely punished when we arrived in Germany. Accordingly, those of us who had kept diaries made ready to destroy them.

Sunday, February 24, dawned, a cold cheerless day. We were now in the comparatively narrow waters of the Skager Rack—our last chance had nearly gone. Most of us were resigned to our fate and saw no hope, but some said we still might see a British war vessel when we rounded the Skaw. At midday the sailor on the look-out came into the saloon and reported to the captain that a fog was coming on. "Just the weather I want," he exclaimed; "with this lovely fog we shall round the Skaw and get into German waters unobserved." It looked, indeed, as if our arrival in Germany were now a dead certainty.

But the fog that the captain welcomed was just a little too much for him; it was to prove his undoing instead of his salvation. The good old German God, about whom we had heard so much, was not going to see them through this time. For once *we* were to be favoured. The white fog thickened after the midday meal, and, luckily for us, it was impossible to see far ahead. Soon after two we passed a floating mine, and we knew that before long we should be going through a mine-field—not a very cheerful prospect with floating mines round us in a fog. But we were all too far gone to care; nothing could be much worse than imprisonment in Germany, and some of us were discussing the prospects and conditions of this when, at 3.30 on that Sunday afternoon, we felt a slight bump, as if the ship had touched bottom. Then another bump, and then still one more! We were fast! Were we really to be saved at the very last minute? It began to look like it, but it would not do to build too much on this slender foundation. The engines continued working, but no progress was made; they were reversed, still no movement. The fog was fairly thick, we could just make out through it the line of the shore, and the waves breaking on it some distance away; and two syrens were going at full blast, one from a lightship, one from a lighthouse. The German officers became agitated, a boat was got out, soundings made, and various means adopted to work the ship off, but all were of no avail. The captain admitted his charts of this particular spot were not new and not good. It was impossible to tell the state of the tide at this moment; we all hoped it might be high tide, for then our rescue would be certain. The engines were set to work from time to time, but no

movement could be made. Darkness fell, and found us still stuck fast. Our spirits had begun to rise, the prospect was distinctly brighter, and soon after six o'clock the assistant lieutenant went ashore in mufti to telephone to the nearest port, Frederikshavn, for help. What reply he received we never heard, but we *did* hear that he reported he was on a German ship from Bergen to Kiel, and wanted help. Lorenco Marques to Kiel, *vid* Iceland, would have been nearer the truth!

About eight o'clock we heard from one of the neutrals among the crew that the captain of a salvage tug was shortly coming aboard to inquire into matters. The ladies among us decided to stay in the saloon while the captain of the tug interviewed the German captain in the chart-room above it. On the arrival of the tug captain on the bridge the ladies in the saloon created a veritable pandemonium in the saloon, singing, shrieking, and laughing at the top of their voices. It sounded more like a Christmas party than one of desperate prisoners in distress. The Danish captain departed; what had been the result of his visit we did not know, but at any rate he knew there were women on board. The German captain came down from the saloon, asked pleasantly enough what all the noise was about, and said, "I have offered the salvage people £5000 to tow the ship off. Money is nothing to us Germans. This will be done at four to-morrow morning, and we shall then proceed on our way to Kiel."

Some of us had talked over a plan suggested by the second mate of one of the captured ships, by which a neutral among the crew should contrive to go ashore in one of the tug's boats in the darkness, communicate with the nearest British Consul, and inform him of the situation and the desperate case we were in. We promised him £500, to be raised among the "saloon passengers," if by so doing our rescue should be accomplished.

We remained in the saloon talking over developments when we heard that a Danish gunboat had come nearly alongside, and that her commander was coming on board. He had presumably received a report from the captain of the tug. We heard afterwards that he had his suspicions about the ship, and had brought with him on board one of his own men to make inquiries of the crew, among whom were Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, while he kept the German commander busy in the saloon. The previous mistake of taking the Danish captain on to the bridge was not to be repeated. The commander of the gunboat was to come into the saloon. So the ladies could not remain there and make their presence known, but some of them contrived to leave some of their garments on the table and settee in the saloon—a muff, hats, gloves, &c. These the Danish

commander must have seen; and not only that, for he saw some ladies who had stood in one door of the saloon before they were sent to their cabins when he entered at the other one. He also saw a passenger in khaki uniform, the Australian Major of the A.M.C., and other passengers standing with the ladies in the alleyway. If he had entertained any suspicions as to the correct character of the ship, which the Germans were of course trying to conceal, they must have been strongly confirmed by now. It was too late for us to be sent to our cabins, as a German sailor came and ordered. We had achieved our object.

It was a night of great unrest, but, finally, most of us lay down in our clothes. For very many nights we had been unable to rest properly owing to the violence of the weather, the possibility of having to leave the ship at any moment, and general anxiety concerning our desperate condition. At four in the morning we heard the engines working, as the captain had told us they would, but still no movement could be heard. Soon the engines ceased: it was evident then that the attempt to get the ship off must for the present be given up. The wind was rising and the sea getting rougher, and at 6 A.M. a German sailor came and knocked at the doors of all the cabins, saying, "Get up, and pack your baggage, and go ashore." It seemed too good to be true; never was order more willingly and gladly obeyed. But first we had to see how the ship stood with regard to the shore. We went out on deck to look —there was the blessed green shore, clear of fog, less than half a mile away, the first really solid earth we had seen near at hand since we left Colombo exactly five months before. It did not take us long to dress and throw our things into our bags. When we had done so and were ready to go to the lifeboats, we were told that we might take no baggage whatever, as the lifeboat was from a shore station and could save lives only, not baggage.

The German captain took his bad luck in good part; but he was, of course, as sick as we were rejoiced at the turn events had taken. He had known the night before he could get no help from the Danish authorities, as they refused towing assistance till all the passengers had been taken off the ship. But he had hoped to get off unaided at four in the morning. He professed great anger with the Danes, saying that if they had only helped as he requested, the ship could have been towed off in the night, and we with all our baggage could have been landed at a Danish port alongside a pier the next morning, instead of having to leave all our baggage behind on the ship. I fancy not many of us believed this; if the ship had been got off, we should have brought up at

Kiel and not at any Danish port. And, as the tug captain said afterwards, if he had towed the ship off, the Germans would have most likely cut the hawser directly afterwards; he would have received no pay for his work, and we certainly should not have landed in Denmark.

XI.

A fine lifeboat manned by sturdy Danish sailors was alongside the ship; the sea was very rough, but our ship steady, firmly embedded in the sandy bottom. Once more we all climbed a ship's ladder; the lifeboat was rising and falling almost the height of the ship with the heavy seas, and descent into it was not easy. But nothing mattered now; once over the side of the ship we were no longer in German hands, and were *free*. The waves dashed over and drenched us as we sat in the lifeboat; we were sitting in icy water, all of us more or less wet through. At last the lifeboat crew pulled for the shore, the high seas sweeping over us all the way. We grounded on the beach; the sturdy sailors carried some, others jumped into the water and waded ashore, and we were all on *terra firma*, free at last, after weary months of waiting and captivity. We had been saved at the eleventh hour, almost the fifty-ninth minute of it; we were at the gates of Germany, being due at Kiel the very next day. It was a miraculous escape if ever there was one, and came at a moment when all hope seemed gone. Would that the *Wolf* had gone ashore in the same place! All our fellow-countrymen on board her would then have been free, and they could have given information and saved us as well.

Once on dry land we walked up to the lighthouse. There we were received with open arms. The kindly Danes could not do enough for us. We had only what we stood up in; we dried our clothes, other dry garments were offered us, hot drinks and food were supplied liberally, and we were generally made much of. We had come back to life and warmth once more. The lighthouse staff and villagers vied with each other in their efforts to make us feel at home and comfortable, and after interviews with some Danish Government officials we were taken to hotels in Skagen, the name of the nearest town, a small summer bathing resort just to the south of the Skaw. After lunch, the first square meal we had had for months, we set off to telegraph to our relatives and friends, and announce we were still in the world. It was one of our greatest anxieties on board, that we could not communicate with our friends, who, we knew

would be grieving over our disappearance, and, we feared, must have given us up for lost. The same afternoon we walked back to the beach to see if we could go aboard the stranded ship to retrieve our luggage, but the sea was far too rough to allow of this, and the German and Spanish crew had not been taken off. While on the beach we saw two floating mines exploded by a Danish gunboat. We had not only had a narrow escape from the Germans, but also from the dangers of a mine-field. The next day was again too rough for us to go aboard—in fact it was so rough that the lifeboat went out and took everybody off the ship, both Spanish and German. The Spanish first mate was thus saved, and after all did not serve his sentence in Germany. It was reported that a German submarine appeared to take off the German officers, but it was too rough to lower the boats, so this could not be contrived.

The *Igotz Mendi* was now deserted, but she had reverted to her original owners and was no longer a German prize. She would have been the only prize the *Wolf* had secured to take home—a neutral ship with only a few tons of coal on board, and a few married couples and sick and elderly men as prisoners. Not much to show for a fifteen months' cruise, and even that was denied the Germans; though the *Wolf* had certainly carried home a valuable cargo and some hundreds of prisoners, had sunk seven steamers and seven sailing-ships, and claimed many more ships sunk as a result of her mine-laying.

Never was there a more dramatic turning of the tables: the Germans were now interned and we were free. The German officers were sent off under guard to an inland town, and the sailors sent to a camp in another part of Denmark. The sailors did not attempt to disguise their joy at the turn events had taken. On their return to Germany they would have had a few weeks' leave, and then done duty in a submarine or at the front. Now, they were interned in a land where there was at least much more to eat than they could have hoped for in Germany, and their dangers were at an end till the war was over. They were marched under an armed guard of Danes up and down the village street several times on one of these days; they were all smiles, singing as they marched along.

The next day a hurricane was still blowing, and going aboard was still out of the question. The ship was blown farther inshore, and it began to look as if she would break up and we should see nothing of our personal belongings. The day after, however, was beautifully fine, and we left Skagen harbour in two motor barges and boarded the ship, which was in charge of the Danish authorities. After some difficulty, for the ship was in a state of great chaos, we secured all our baggage,

which was landed that night at Skagen much to our relief, as it was badly wanted. We had set feet on the *Igotz Mendi* for the last time.

The position of the ship was a unique one. She was a neutral ship, a German prize, stranded in neutral waters with a crew composed of Germans and neutral prisoners, and carrying passenger prisoners of many enemy nationalities —English, Australian, American, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian. The Danish authorities adjudged her, on the day after her stranding, to be a Spanish ship; and before leaving her the Spanish flag was hoisted at her stern, the first time that or any other flag had appeared there since that November morning when the Germans had captured her far away in the Indian Ocean.

During the week we had to give evidence to the Danish authorities concerning our capture and treatment on board. We were overwhelmed with kindness by the Danes, who made no secret of their sympathies with the Allies; invitations to dinners and parties flowed in, and we could not have accepted them all if we had stayed as many weeks as we had days. On Friday, March 1, most of us left Skagen. The whole village turned out to give us a good send-off. The ladies among us were presented with flowers and chocolates, the men with smokes, and we left with the heartiest good wishes of our warm-hearted hosts. From Skagen our passage was arranged by the British Consular authorities. We stayed a few days in Copenhagen, and then travelled through Sweden and Norway, leaving a port somewhere in that country for another somewhere in this, and so to London, where we arrived in a characteristic pea-soup fog on the morning of March 10, after incessant travelling by train and sea for a week. We feared that as we had escaped the Germans once, they might make a special effort to sink us crossing the North Sea; but fortunately the U-boats left us alone, though few, if any of us, turned in during those last two nights.

No comment need be made on the German procedure of dragging their prisoners, month after month, over the oceans. Such a thing had never been done before. Some men had been kept prisoners on the *Wolf* for nearly a year. It was hard enough on the men, but infinitely worse for the women. One had been eight months, one seven, and others five months in captivity, often under the worst possible conditions. But they all kept cheerful throughout, even when it appeared we were certain to be taken into Germany.

Every man is liable to think under such conditions that he is in a worse case than his fellow-captives. There were certainly examples of very

hard luck amongst us. The American captain had abandoned his sea calling for six years, and decided to make one more trip and take his wife to see her relatives in Newcastle, N.S.W. They never got there, but had eight months' captivity and were landed in Denmark instead. Many sailors captured in the Pacific had left the Atlantic trade after encounters with the U-boats in that ocean. One of the members of the Spanish crew had been a toreador, but his mother considered that calling too dangerous, and recommended the sea as safer. Her son now thinks otherwise; perhaps she does, too! I thought, until our timely rescue came, that our own case was a fairly hard one. I had retired, after spending twenty years in Government service in Siam, and we had decided to spend some months at least, possibly "the duration," in South Africa before proceeding home. Our plans went hopelessly astray, our health has not improved by the treatment; but although we took six months to get from Siam to London, the Germans have succeeded in getting us home much earlier than we, or they, anticipated.

Fortunately one usually forgets the miseries of sea travel soon after one gets ashore. But never, I think, will one of us ever forget our long captivity at sea with our enemies, or the canned crab, the bully beef, the beans, *and* the roll of the *Igotz Mendi*.

THE WATER-RATS.

BY ZERES.

"Keep the paddles swiftly going;
Rough and fierce the river's flowing,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

See! the sun is fast declining,
To the moon his charge resigning,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

Pull away, boys, nothing fearing,
Though the rapids we are nearing,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

In the well-plied oar confiding,
Safely o'er them we are gliding,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

Keep her clear that granite block there,
See, she nears the sunken rock there,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

Now the threatened danger's over,
Nothing from her course shall move her,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee.

Soon we'll make the ghat, my hearties!
Spend the night in jovial parties,
Ram bol, Hurry bol, Hurry bol Aee."

(*ad infinitum.*)

—*Assamese Boat Song.*

THE Conventional India of the picture-books—of 'Little Henry and his Bearer'—lay sleepily around them. That is to say: tall, tawny tiger-grass that brushed their elephant's forehead; green and feathery toddy-palms deep dipped in golden sunshine; and, in the distance, a vivid streak of crude turquoise, which betrayed the course of a mighty, crocodile-haunted river. The noonday sun beat impartially upon the jungle, the elephant, and the preposterously blue Brahmaputra—for that was the river's name. Incidentally, the elephant possessed a name too: she was called Maria.

Maria possessed no howdah, and the two young sportsmen who rode her clung desperately to the primitive "pad" of their lurching steed, and still more desperately to their double-barrelled ·450s. Readers who may have studied photographs of elephant processions in Princely Indian Durbars need retain no illusions about Maria. She was neither ornamental, docile, nor sagacious. On the contrary, this old red-eyed slut of a timber-hauler from a tea-chest factory near by bore

about as much resemblance to the tusk-gilded aristocrats of Delhi as a charwoman bears to a duchess.

Her temper was uncertain, her gait was like an earthquake, and her belly and legs were shamelessly caked with cracked mud; caught in the *keddah*[1] at an advanced age, she was only half broken; and finally, it must be alleged against her character that her favourite beverage was planters' gin.

She had been handed over to the two Shikaris—a young police officer and his friend, a cavalry subaltern—free gratis and for nothing for a few days' shooting, and already her temporary owners were beginning to realise the truth of the adage which points out that it is often far better to give than to receive. They had been perambulating the jungle since dawn that morning, and the combination of the sun on their spines and Maria's sea-sick heaving shuffle was beginning to tell most unpleasantly upon both of them.

"I say," at length exclaimed the Subaltern, with that dreadful candour which characterises Young Humanity in moments of acute distress, "if this switchback business goes on much longer, I shall eat my soul out."

"*I* have," came a resigned reply from the other side of the moving mountain. Here Maria surpassing herself with a figure of eight stern waggle—as she slid into a *nullah*—both voices died away again into ominous silence. The Assistant Superintendent of Police was, at more normal moments, a pleasant-featured, tired-looking youth. His weary smile and eternal assumption of excessive boredom not infrequently proved the undoing of those unwary Orientals who failed to penetrate beneath his fatigued exterior. He formed rather a complete contrast to the soldier who now shared the elephant with him. The latter was a restless enthusiast and an incorrigible optimist of the genus irrepressible among subalterns: a species off whose backs work or worry, success or failure, roll as easily as water off a duck's. This particular specimen of a wholly satisfactory type of modern British youth had but recently left Rugby in order to join the Indian Army, where, in his own regiment—Hastings' Horse—he was popularly known as the Hun-Child. This on account of a certain cultivated martial ferocity of parade manner, which was, however, much to his own annoyance, very heavily discounted by his preposterously juvenile appearance. He was at present on sick leave from Mesopotamia, and had just arrived from Calcutta in order to spend a generous week-end with his friend.

Suddenly the elephant stopped dead, and cocked her by no means coquettish ears.

"What's up *now?*" inquired the Subaltern, raising his head;

[1] *Keddah.* A round-up of wild elephants by domesticated ones.

"wonder if she's spotted a tiger. Old Morrison warned us she generally bolted when she did."

"More likely she's spotted pink rats after all that liquor she swallowed last night," grumbled the Policeman. "But, by Jove, no!" he added a second later, pulling himself upon the top of the pad. "Listen to that!"

An angry bubble squelched from the depths of the jungle straight ahead, and Maria waved her trunk thoughtfully. "*Rhino,*" whispered the Policeman; "what a pity they're preserved just now."

"But," suggested the Subaltern guilefully, "you're allowed to shoot in self-defence, and we can't risk Maria's beauty bein' spoiled . . . a bull rhino can knock an elephant over if he catches her sideways."

The rhinoceros settled this knotty point in morality by suddenly making an entirely unprovoked assault upon the now hysterical Maria, to whom he appeared to have taken an instinctive aversion at first sight. The two Shikaris just had time to fire wildly together, and then their gun-shy elephant bolted.

When in a hurry elephants do not gallop, but on occasion they travel rather faster than if they did. When this happens their riders know exactly what a pea feels like when rattled inside an empty drum.

The rhinoceros, having missed his charge, stood staring with his pig-like eyes at the vanishing party, but made no attempt to follow up his initial success.

Maria having deposited both her English riders—one after the other—in clumps of clinging bamboo, then endeavoured to pluck her native Mahout from her neck with her fumbling trunk. Foiled in this laudable endeavour by repeated blows from the Mahout's *ankus*, she galumphed into a reach of the river, and squealed wildly for gin, with which to calm her now lacerated nervous system. Her Mahout smote her violently over the skull with the vigour of a navvy picking open a drain.

"Peace! my heart's treasure," he said suitably. "Fear nothing, little black pearl, for is not old Jamu with thee?" and he smote her again to show that he was. The little black pearl, thus reassured, waddled up out of the bed of the Brahmaputra, and plucked a young toddy-palm by way of light refreshment. Old Jamu inquired if she found it to her liking.

"Y' *'r'rumph!*" assented Maria curtly.

"And now, little princess, we return to seek the Sahib-Log."

"N' *'r'rumph!*" declined Maria firmly, and thereupon set off for camp at a sort of lollopping gambol, leaving her abandoned riders to find their way home—that is to say, to the police-officer's patrol-boat on the river—as best they might.

. . . . . .

The source of the Brahmaputra lies somewhere in Central Asia. Certain inquisitive souls have a perfect mania for looking for it. Somebody or other is finally supposed to have found it, and since nine people out of ten are not in a position to argue the point, we may as well accept the supposition as correct. The Brahmaputra is rather unique among rivers, and its perils are not dissimilar to those of the Dogger Bank with an occasional cyclone thrown in. Its dense fogs,[1] its shifting sandbanks, its iron reefs, its furious currents, its sudden floods, and its frequent storms, all tax the skill of the most experienced of navigators, many of whom have been known to declare openly that they feel far happier in a good honest Chinese typhoon than when on the bosom of India's greatest and most treacherous river.

At places—and this some two hundred miles from its mouth—it is not unfrequently six or seven miles broad during the monsoon, while on the other hand it sometimes squeezes itself through rocky defiles but a thousand yards in width, with all the swift rush of a rapid.

On its way to the sea it is fed by a thousand tributaries—the main stream of the many-channelled Ganges being one not unuseful contribution—and the confluence of such subsidiary streams are known locally as *mukhs*, or mouths.

Like all great arteries of traffic, whether they be railways, tubes, important thoroughfares, or, in this case, rivers, the lower stretches of the maze-like waterways of Eastern Bengal and Lower Assam are infested by a whole host of more or less professional criminals, whose activities are varied and multitudinous. Owing to the confusing manner in which, amid this perfect network of rivers, the channels shift and alter almost yearly, and also by reason of the recurrent and devastating inundations which preclude the construction of any adequate road, railway, or telegraph system, the process of bringing such elusive criminals to justice is no easy task. In consequence the local police seldom make any important "haul" without an infinity of stratagem that usually culminates in a battle royal.

In the actual case of the wild swampy belt of big-game haunted country in which the Young Policeman and his friend were shooting, the almost insurmountable difficulties of internal communication amid its trackless depths and tortuous backwaters rendered it a peculiarly favourite *locale* for the evil-doer in search of a safe refuge or a discreet rendezvous. Such local defiers of the Law are specialised in different forms of villainy, as three unbroken years in their midst had already taught the young Assistant Superintendent.

Firstly, there were the river pirates—frank *dacoits*—who swam on board anchored native

[1] Caused by snow-water encountering the heat of the plains.

craft at night, cut the throats of the sleeping crew, and after throwing their bodies overboard proceeded to occupy the ship themselves. Then there were opium and cocaine smugglers, disguised as simple fisher-folk, with illicit cargoes stored between the seams of their boats; Bengali anarchists seeking opportunities of meeting gun-runners from the Philippines; and a whole host of other queer—and desperate—malefactors outside the ken of the Constabulary in England. Indeed, the Young Policeman's lot, if not always an entirely happy one, was never devoid of incident, and prior to obtaining a few days' shooting-leave in his own district in the company of his friend, he had not ceased from, or paused in, his teasing labours for nearly eighteen overworked months. Even now—in local parlance—he was still at the end of the wire, which, translated into practical language, meant that his services still remained at the immediate disposal of his seniors in case of local emergency.

Dirty monsoon weather was blowing up from the direction of the distant Bay,[1] when the two Shikaris arrived home late that evening after their spill off the elephant.

As already explained, their shooting headquarters were established on board a river launch, which was at the disposal of the police officer and his armed constables when their duties took them afloat.

This launch—called the *Vampire*—was a crazy old sun-blistered stern-wheeler that was presumably propelled through the agency of steam. This presumption may be said to rest firstly on the fact that her decks were always deep in soot, and secondly, because she possessed a vertical projection amidships which bore some remote resemblance to a smoke-stack. In no other respects, however, did she conform to the popularly conceived idea of a steamboat.

The two boys, tired out after their long, hot, and profitless day on shore, scrambled gratefully on board again, and lowering themselves cautiously into two rickety deck-chairs, called loudly for liquid refreshment.

"Strikes me the snaggy old ditch is rising pretty fast to-night," remarked the weather-wise minion of the Law, putting down his empty tumbler with a sigh of content, and gazing dubiously across the raging brown flood of waters. "I shouldn't be at all surprised," he added fatalistically, "if half the countryside isn't under water by the morning."

"Well, then, we can do a Noah's Ark stunt in this bally old flat-iron of yours," replied the Hun-Child resignedly, as he too finished his peg; "only, personally speakin', I bar takin' that god-forsaken *hathi* on board for a cruise. Look at the old bitch now,"—and he nodded across the taffrail towards Maria's standings on the bank,—"she's as pleased as Punch

[1] Of Bengal, understood locally.

at havin' made both of us out voluntaries this mornin'. But what's the odds, so long as you're happy," he concluded philosophically. "Who's for a tub? Bag's I first!" and, darting swiftly into their common bathroom before protest was possible, he coolly annexed the premises, turned on both taps to their fullest extent, and, whistling with offensive triumph, proceeded to unlace *le dernier cri* in brown cavalry field-boots. A minute later, and a mighty splash testified to his gifts as a quick-change artist, as, lifting his voice in untuneful song, he began to make the evening hideous with sentimental noises.

> "And when I *tell* them
> How beautiful you *are*,
> They never ber-lieve me,
> They never ber-lieve me,"—

he chanted dolefully. And, picking his perilous way through five different verses in three distinct keys, he continued to lament the incredulity of the world at large in respect to the charms of a lady—identity not disclosed—who, as he stated in agonised falsetto, had one day promised to be his wife.

In the meantime, his less exuberant friend had received a cipher telegram, which he was even now decoding with his usual calm precision. Once decoded, it seemed to give him furiously to think, for he pulled a puzzling-looking survey map from the cabin wall and studied it carefully with wrinkled brow.

Tracing the complex courses of the maze-like waterways before him with his forefinger, he finally pricked two holes on the map with the points of his compasses, and then produced a protractor. Having taken certain measurements along the latter, and having compared them with the scale of the map, he then took out his watch, looked at the telegram again, and made some mental calculations in terms of time. These appeared to be more or less satisfactory, for, yawning to himself, he paused to kill a mosquito before returning on deck. Here he walked for'ard, and gently but firmly kicked the opium-sodden crew into some semblance of life, and further interrupted what appeared to be a game of skill or hazard among his police-constables.

"Get those two anchors up," he said quietly in the vernacular. "Where's the head *serang*?[1] On shore? Well, let him stop there. Tell the engineer to be ready with all the steam he can muster in less than no time. Yes, we're going up the river to-night on business. No, the current isn't too strong. All the same" (he soliloquised to himself, scrutinising the flood), "I wonder if we *have* got enough steam to go up-stream in this current. Lucky we kept any going at all: we shouldn't have but for wanting some to run the dynamos for our fans and lights."

"What's the joke?" inquired the Hun-Child, who here re-

[1] Native sailor.

appeared, rubbing himself immodestly with a ragged bath-towel, and looking like a dishevelled chicken.

"A stunt of sorts," replied the Policeman briefly, amid his nautical activities; "some Bengali anarchists out on the rampage. No time to explain details just now. See you later. . . . Yes, Alla Din, you can cast off as soon as you're ready."

. . . . . .

The rusty anchor-chains rattled noisily into the echoing hull, the leadsmen in the bows started their monotonous sailor chantey as they began sounding the depth of water, and then the *Vampire*, swinging out from the shelter of the shore, met the full force of the now furious current. It caught her in its embrace, and immediately whirled her two miles downstream as though she had been a child's model. Again and again the helmsman tried to bring her round head-on to the stream, and again and again her engines lacked the power to second his efforts. At last, after describing a dozen mad, half-drifting and half-steaming semicircles, her engines, now working under full pressure of steam, seemed to "bite on," and a few minutes later, after awaiting his opportunity, the helmsman finally managed to swing her bows up-stream into the current. Under the crushing strain of tons of angry water, the launch was now shaking and rattling from stem to stern, until every rivet in her ancient structure threatened to burst from its appointed place.

Her great clumsy stern-wheel was shrieking and groaning like some damned soul as it churned the boiling mill-race which swept roaring under the tortured paddles. At first the *Vampire* made no progress at all. Indeed, as the Policeman perceived by reference to the moonlit bank, they still continued to be forced down-stream, though now only slowly. "Try and work her under the lee of that island," he advised the *serang*, and the latter followed the suggestion, nearly grounding on a new and uncharted sand-bank as he did so. Under the lee of the island the full force of the current was broken, and they were able to make some headway until again exposed to its full violence on the farther side. By dint of tacking between this or that island or promontory, they finally managed to make slow but steady progress up the angry river, although, as the Mohamedan engineer below remarked encouragingly from time to time, it was only Allah the Compassionate who knew how long the *injins* would hold together. The Subaltern, now clothed and in his right mind—and clasping an enormous ham-sandwich to his bosom—scrambled upon the bridge with a view to making more comprehensive professional inquiry into the nature of the local tactics employed for circumventing anarchists in cataracts. "What

are we actually supposed to be doing?" he shouted above the racket from the clanging engine-room, and the great thumping rumble of the labouring paddle-wheel.

"It's like this," the Policeman shouted back. "I've just got a wire from my boss. He's fifty miles up-stream. About a dozen chaps belonging to a particularly pestiferous secret society have slipped through his fingers, and have taken to the river. They're coming down-stream now in a native dug-out at whatever pace you like to call the current. They're almost certain to make for a certain tributary called the Bandamukhi, which joins the main stream about seven miles above us. If they get there before we do, they'll probably escape altogether, because the Bandamukhi isn't navigable for any screw- or paddle-propelled boat; it's all silted up for one thing, and bung-full up with lotuses for another."

"I see," replied the Subaltern; "but even if they do slip up this bolt-hole of theirs before we arrive, can't we still continue the movement by chasing them in our dingey?"

The Policeman shook his head tolerantly, and shouted down the speaking-tube. "No," he explained a few minutes later when he had ended his remarks on the principles of stoking, "it's no earthly good going after them once they're up the Bandamukhi. For one thing, the jungle's so dense and overhanging that you can't see more than fifty yards at a stretch, and to go on with, the stream — such as it is — splits up into a dozen minor channels, which go meandering about in all directions. You might as well look for a needle in a haystack as for a boatload of anarchists in a thousand square miles of bog, quicksand, and tiger-grass. However, if my calculations are correct, we ought to be on the spot before they are, always provided" — he hedged — "the engines stand the racket and we don't run into fog."

"Any chance of these Johnnies comin' to grief this sort of weather?" asked the Subaltern.

"No. A shallow-draught native dug-out running with the stream is as safe as houses."

"How will you spot this particular dug-out among others?"

"Because it's such a h—ll of a night that no native craft with a clear conscience will be moving about the river — at least, not voluntarily. Anyhow, bad weather narrows our search."

"Will they put up a show if we do round them up?"

"You bet," came the grim reply. "If they're the chaps we think they are, two are certain 'lifers' if caught, and a third's a hanging case; he derailed a train. The Bengali can fight when he wants to — that's to say, when he's cornered like a rat in a trap."

The Hun-Child brightened visibly. "What a joke this

all is," he said happily; "it beats Messpot all to pieces. I mean, you seldom see the stinkin' Turk within half a mile of you; but this scrap of yours ought to be a heart-to-heart sort of show—like a footer scrum." His friend smiled dryly as he eyed the swollen river ahead with dispassionate gaze. "At this rate," he remarked unsympathetically, after giving a sudden sharp command to the helmsman, "it's much more likely to resemble a burial at sea. . . . Shall we dodge that next great lump of muck all right, I wonder"—he added fatalistically—"or *not?*" That "next great lump of muck" was one of many apparent floating islands which were continually tearing past them in the moonlight on either beam. Such driftsdam was for the most part composed of mighty groves of heavy-trunked trees, uprooted wholesale by the flood, and which, with their greenery still flaunting above the surface, were being whirled rapidly seawards.

A collision—or even a graze—with the least among such formidable collections of derelict timber would have sunk the *Vampire* in thirty seconds, as the cool boy now driving his gimcrack vessel between their angry eddies knew only too well. Just a year previously he had experienced one such violent encounter afloat, and since he and two *serangs* had been the only survivors out of a crew of fifteen souls, he had not altogether forgotten the episode.

"Will your anarchist pals be decently armed?" went on the importunate Hun-Child, as unabashed he watched his friend's directions to the now frankly terrified helmsman. The tone in which his inquiry was made implied that he hoped that they would be.

"You needn't worry," replied his friend laconically. "Anyhow, they'll not be worse armed than the Government Police. My constables," he explained rather bitterly, "are only trusted with obsolete army carbines."

At that moment the look-out *serang* gave a long-drawn nasal cry in some unknown language. However, the Assistant Superintendent of Police seemed to grasp its import, for shading his eyes for a minute against the tropic moon glare, he directed the Subaltern's attention to a small black bobbing speck that stained the brilliance of the silvery water a few miles ahead. "There they are," he said briefly. "Five to one those are the chaps we want. Before their time though by my calculations. Still, as they haven't made the Bandamukhi it doesn't much matter."

The Hun-Child danced about the bridge like an agitated fox-terrier, and then rushed below to retrieve a sporting rifle.

. . . . . .

The nature of the anarchists' escape from the toils of the law up-stream had been as follows.

The Superintendent of Police—already referred to by the Assistant Superintendent as his

"boss"—becoming aware that a certain township on the river was affording a field of activity for some political malcontents, had detailed a native inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department to shadow their movements, and further to ascertain whether they were in the habit of meeting clandestinely for purposes of co-operation.

Warrants of arrest were already in existence for the more notorious among them, but to take isolated action against this or that individual meant scaring the rest of the covey away, and this was obviously impolitic if by the exercise of a little patience the whole band could be rounded up at some rendezvous. The native detective had carried out his duties most efficiently. So discreetly had he performed the task allotted him that the malcontents, although always on the look-out for police surveillance, had noticed none, and in consequence were under no apprehensions concerning their immediate safety. This being the case, they soon grew bold enough to meet together at irregular intervals and at different rendezvous. So cautiously were the arrangements for such reunions conducted that it was not until they had already forgathered three or four times that Inspector Jyotish Sen—himself a loyal Bengali—was in a position to anticipate their movements and forestall their intentions. However, his opportunity came at last, and one evening he arrived post-haste at his English superior's quarters with the welcome information that the conspirators were shortly expected to assemble at a certain little house overlooking the river. Already his C.I.D. constables—in disguise—were unostentatiously watching this quarter of the bazar, and at a word from them the regular armed police could rapidly surround the building. The whole of Jyotish's *bandobust* was excellent, with the single exception that he omitted to send for a police-boat to picket the river itself. To do him justice, time was short and the police-boat at the other end of the town; and further, under ordinary circumstances no shipping ever anchored in the vicinity of the suspected house, and the river, of course, was far too swollen at this time of year for a man to think of escape by swimming. However, this tactical omission on the Inspector's part was to undo the hard work of a fortnight, because the anarchists—who never took any chances—had arranged a line of retreat by way of the river, engaging for this purpose a native boatman, who had orders to lie up under the bank some fifty yards away from their meeting-place. No sooner did the Superintendent of Police and his armed constables appear at the head of the street that led to the river bank, than the seditionists dashed through the garden behind the house, and shooting down the two plain-clothes policemen who were stationed there, leaped into their boat and were borne

rapidly down-stream. The evening mist was rising off the water at the time, and this enveloping them they were speedily out of sight. The birds flown, all that remained to be done was to telegraph their movements lower down the river. As the young Policeman down-stream had anticipated, their immediate intention had been to make the mouth of the Brahma Bandamukhi. That they had missed it was only due to the same fog which had in the first instance assisted their escape; and, on running into clear water again, the first thing that they saw was the *Vampire*.

"Steer past that ship at as great a distance as is possible," commanded their leader, addressing the native boatman, who sat crouched in the stern of the dug-out grasping the steering-paddle, which took the place of a rudder.

"Very good, *babu-gee*," the man replied doubtfully; "but they have only to turn, overhaul, and run us down at their pleasure."

"Cannot you lead them upon some shoal or sand-bank?" inquired the Bengali, his shrewd brain quickly adapting itself to conditions that were utterly foreign to it. "See, your boat draws but a few inches of water, and the steamer must draw many feet."

"God knows, I dare not trifle with the police," whined the fisherman, rapidly becoming terror-stricken at the prospect of an undesired conflict with the Law, to which he now seemed committed.

"Fool!" screamed the anarchist passionately, as they swept nearer the police-boat, "do something or I will kill thee!" and he thrust his automatic pistol into the trembling man's face. This proved the last straw to the boatman's nerves, for, dropping his steering-oar overboard in a panic, he flung himself prostrate at the bottom of the dug-out and cried for mercy. A second later some freak of the current had seized the rudderless barque in its grasp, and had driven it at full speed upon a partially submerged mud-flat, which at normal times probably formed part of the now flooded and almost invisible river bank. The boat having plenty of way on, was carried well home into the middle of the yielding ooze, where it stuck fast but did not capsize. All this happened—far more swiftly than it takes a pen to describe it—within a quarter of a mile of the *Vampire*, to whose crew the fate of the dug-out was plainly visible in the moonlight. The Policeman paused irresolutely for a second, for the immediate tactical situation seemed rather baffling.

"How in the name of everything riparian am I to get close up to them across all that mud?" he reflected. "I can't open fire on them until I've made certain they're the chaps we want, and not then until I've given 'em a chance of surrendering." He despatched a *serang* to fetch him the ship's megaphone with a view to hailing them, but before the man could return the anar-

chists disclosed their identity with a burst of fire from their automatic pistols. The *Vampire* was now almost opposite the stranded dug-out, and about one hundred and fifty yards away from it, the river rushing, rough, hissing, and foam-flecked, between them. The anarchists' fire was concentrated on the launch's bridge, and as the result of a lucky shot the *serang* at the wheel rolled quietly under his steering apparatus. Uncontrolled, the *Vampire* swung off her course at once, and again bade fair to become the toy of the elements. The Subaltern, however, seized the abandoned wheel and drove her bows into the current anew. At this fresh strain upon them, her indignant engines banged and rattled as though they were going to fall through her bottom.

"Wait till I get a chance of a shot back at the swine!" raged the Hun-Child, scarlet in the face between his fury and his unaccustomed labours. "Thank God, here's another lascar.... Here ... take hold you ..." and handing over the wheel to a native sailor, he ran to join the Assistant Superintendent, who was mustering his half-dozen constables amidships.

By this time—as a result of the Subaltern's saving of the situation—the steam-launch had crawled several hundred yards above the stranded dug-out, and here Fortune began to favour the representatives of the Law. The flood had scooped out a great crescent-shaped sweep of land where the bank was softest, and this had automatically resulted in the formation of a kind of promontory, where the firmer ground up-stream still stood fast. The Policeman's discriminating eye now rapidly took in the possibilities of this topographic situation, and steering the *Vampire* into the comparatively slack water below this newly-formed and natural breakwater, he cast anchor there, and waited to see how she took the strain.

Thrice they were obliged to pay out more cable, but at length the launch ceased dragging down-stream, and came to a fairly firm anchorage. "I'm pushing off in the dingey," explained the Policeman hurriedly as he strapped his revolver to his belt; "if we hug what's left of the bank we ought to be able to drift straight down on the top of those chaps. You might stop on board and look after things while I'm away."

"Be d——d if I do!" replied his frankly insubordinate special constable, and a minute later both of them fell pell-mell among the *serangs* and police sepoys in the rocking rowboat below.

Although the water under the bank had been slack enough to admit of the steam-launch anchoring there, it was—as the Hun-Child remarked tersely—"no immoral joy-ride" in the open dingey. The moment they cast off from the launch a hissing swirl carried them over the top of the flooded bank, and bore them

nearly a quarter of a mile inland. Here, however, the current becoming weaker and more erratic, the *serangs* were able to row an indirect course, which took them appreciably nearer the anarchists, who still lay below them down-stream. These latter could be seen making desperate efforts to refloat the dug-out, but it appeared to be irrevocably fixed where it had first grounded. At intervals both sides sniped each other in the moonlight, but with no effect that was apparent. Meanwhile the dingey was rowed back to a strategic point from which it seemed probable — after observing the course of minor flotsam as it passed—that the current would eventually carry them straight down upon their prey. Bidding the *serangs* ship their oars and draw their knives, the Policeman steered the little boat into the very heart of the next eddy, simultaneously announcing his intention of "letting her rip."

He let her rip, with the most astonishing results for all concerned. The dingey slipping into the eddy sprung round twice like a teetotum, and then in a flash before either friend or foe knew exactly what had happened, she had charged the dug-out broadside on, with all the accuracy and velocity of a well-directed torpedo. After that, as the Hun-Child said —borrowing metaphor from 'Alice in Wonderland'—"most things twinkled."

To describe with any degree of lucidity the varying fortunes of a life-and-death struggle which took place by moonlight in three or four feet of mud and water between the late occupants of two capsized boats is obviously no easy task. Suffice to say that the Subaltern more than once realised his ambition of a "heart-to-heart talk" with his foes. Firearms — as such — played little part in the *mêlée*, because nearly all of them were jammed with mud and thus rendered useless. The police, however, were using the butt in such cases as the collision had not parted them from their carbines. Where they had lost these weapons they drew their bayonets from their belts and stabbed; the anarchists struck back with pistol-butt, oar-blade, and in two cases with Russian sword walking-sticks. The Hun-Child was being rather badly punished by two heavily-built men, who had collared him low and dragged him down. With great promptitude he had kicked the first in the stomach when attacked, and blacked the second's eye; but having lost his rifle he was unable to inflict mortal injury upon his assailants. They for their part were attempting to use their superiority in weight and numbers to thrust his head under the mud with the object of smothering him. At one time it looked as though their efforts might be crowned with success, for the Subaltern was built on the lines of a light-weight 'chase rider rather than a wrestler, whereas both the Bengalis turned the scale at twelve or thirteen stone. For-

tunately, however, at this critical moment the Policeman managed to struggle to his assistance. Vaguely—as one sees things in a dream—the Subaltern saw his rescuer stumble towards him; but he scarcely recognised his no longer *blasé* friend in this agile shadow that leaped suddenly upon his assailants' backs, and stabbed both scientifically in swift succession with a venemous-looking *serang's* knife. "Thanks, old chap," coughed the Subaltern, half stifled by slime, but still remembering the philosophy of his Surtees: "Luvely weather for bees—ain't it?"

How long the fracas lasted it would be rash to hazard any opinion. Three anarchists managed to flounder away from the mud-flat and apparently reached the flooded mainland; but it is more than probable that they were drowned there later, because they were never heard of again, and the flood rose much higher before the night was over. Of the rest, five of the gang were unquestionably dead, and three still remained. The latter stood sullenly at bay, their backs against the wreckage of the boats; but at this juncture both sides were so exhausted by their "tangle-foot" exertions in the glutinous bog, that a brief armistice ensued automatically. The Police had their casualties, too, but they were not so heavy as the enemy's. The fact that firearms had been rendered valueless by the conditions under which the affray had taken place had not handicapped the men armed with carbines or bayonets half so much as the anarchists; for, as a class, the latter always relied on a stream of bullets from their automatics to settle the police's hash when they came into collision with them, and pistols are singularly ineffectual weapons when used for anything except their natural purpose.

The Hun-Child was the first to recover his breath during this temporary pause in the proceedings. "This," he gasped, peering through a reeking mask of mud and weed like some diminutive Father Thames, "is no sort of a job for cavalry; but hang *that!* Come on, you chaps. 'Ware corpses! Worry! worry! Tear 'um an' eat 'um!" He made smothered hunting noises, and, straddling frog-like through the squelching ooze, flung himself upon the last of the enemy. The next thing he realised was a shattering blow across the side of his head, delivered unexpectedly by a hitherto concealed life-preserver, and this was followed by a complete indifference to his immediate surroundings.

. . . . . .

Maria had watched the departure of the *Vampire* with feelings of unmitigated relief.

At the best of times she disliked all forms of work intensely; but that she should now be expected to spend her usual week-end holiday out *shikaring* with hosts who pos-

sessed no wine-cellar worth mentioning, seemed to her a positive outrage. When, therefore, a few days later, she perceived a small curl of smoke upon the horizon, she watched it with grave mistrust; and when it proved to be the *Vampire* returning on the current with the speed of a destroyer, she raised her trunk to heaven and used an expression of which any lady elephant — she *was* a lady—should have been thoroughly ashamed. The launch flashed past Maria's standings on the bank, and then turning paddled its laborious way back to its old moorings again. The Hun-Child was reclining on deck, his head swathed in bloody bandages. What his medical adviser in Mesopotamia—who had originally invalided him for shell-shock—would have thought of his patient's present idea of a rest-cure is only open to conjecture. However, notwithstanding his broken head, the Subaltern appeared in the best of spirits, as, for the twentieth time that morning, he helped his friend re-read a demi-official and guarded communication from his immediate superiors.

"They're obviously frightfully bucked with you," he was saying. "If you hadn't snaffled them, it looks as if there'd have been some dirty work with the Governor's special train next week. I bet they recommend you for the Police medal."

"As I'm given to understand," said the Policeman cynically, "that all the many obscure rewards for middle-class virtues which obtain in this country are drawn from a lucky-bag on the principle of a lottery, I don't suppose it'll make much difference whether my name's sent in or not."

"Rot!" replied the Subaltern. "Simla's not so bad as you make out; besides which the Police medal isn't an obscure thingummybob for middle-class whatsitsnames."

The *Vampire* thumped heavily against the bank and hooted her syren to express her satisfaction at her safe return, and Maria hooted back at her—for different reasons.

"Anyway," continued the Subaltern as the anchor chains dribbled out in a rumbling stream of noise, "I've had a run for my money this whack of leave. Messpot'll be tame after this blasted province of yours. On my way here the train was tipped off the line by a landslip, and nobody seemed in the least surprised; then we nearly ran over that tigress in old Morrison's car; after that, I got slung over five acres of real estate by that d—d elephant; and finally, I've ended up by being sandbagged, mudlarkin' about on an oyster-bed, with a lot of lousy black Fenians."

His host laughed apologetically. "Yes," he admitted, "I'm afraid we *are* a bit *jungli* in this part of the world. You never know what's going to happen next. We've a local proverb—'one d—d thing after another'—from an earthquake to a hurricane. To be quite candid, I'm getting a bit fed up with it myself. Still," he added more cheerfully, "I don't

expect to stick here for ever. As you know, I've applied twice for the I.A.R.O.,[1] but so far they've told me that I couldn't be spared for the army. However, I'm having another shot once the rains are over, and I may have better luck next time."

"I should have thought," replied the Cavalryman rather dryly, "that you were already earnin' your oats pretty usefully in your present stable."

"Oh, we Policemen have our uses, I suppose. Who was it called us the soldier's little brother? All the same, I feel an awful slacker messing about here doing nothing in particular in war time."

The Hun-Child giggled. "If this sort of game is your idea of slackin' about and doin' nothin'," he said, rubbing his bandaged forehead, "God forbid that I should ever meet you when you're feelin' energetic! And now," he concluded indefatigably, "let's push off on shore and give Maria some more exercise. She's lookin' as gross as a travellin' M.P. I know what *she* wants before I go back to Calcutta, and that's a real good wheelin' into line!"

---

[1] Indian Army Reserve of Officers.

ON PATROL.—VII.

A BATTLE-PRAYER.

SUBMARINES.

WHEN the breaking wavelets pass all sparkling to the sky,
When beyond their crests we see the slender masts go by,
When the glimpses alternate in bubbles white and green,
And funnels grey against the sky show clear and fair between,
When the word is passed along—"Stern and beam and bow"—
"Action stations fore and aft—all torpedoes now!"
When the hissing tubes are still, as if with bated breath
They waited for the word to loose the silver bolts of death,
When the Watch beneath the Sea shall crown the great Desire,
And hear the coughing rush of air that greets the word to fire,
We'll ask for no advantage, Lord—but only we would pray
That they may meet this boat of ours upon their outward way.

THE BATTLE-FLEET.

The moment we have waited long
  Is closing on us fast,
When, cutting short the turret-gong,
We'll hear the Cordite's Battle-song
  That hails the Day at last.
The clashing rams come driving forth
  To meet the waiting shell,
And far away to East and North
Our targets steam to meet Thy Wrath,
  And dare the Gates of Hell.
We do not ask Thee, Lord, to-day
  To stay the sinking sun—
But hear Thy steel-clad servants pray,
And keep, O Lord, Thy mists away
  Until Thy work is done.

DESTROYERS.

Through the dark night
And the fury of battle
Pass the destroyers in showers of spray.
As the Wolf-pack to the flank of the cattle,
We shall close in on them—shadows of grey.
In from ahead,
Through shell-flashes red,
We shall come down to them, after the Day.
Whistle and crash
Of salvo and volley
Round us and into us as we attack.
Light on our target they'll flash in their folly,
Splitting our ears with the shrapnel-crack.
Fire as they will,
We'll come to them still,
Roar as they may at us—Back—Go Back!
White though the sea
To the shell-splashes foaming,
We shall be there at the death of the Hun.
Only we pray for a star in the gloaming
(Light for torpedoes and none for a gun).
Lord—of Thy Grace
Make it a race,
Over the sea with the night to run.

KLAXON.

THE MAN FROM THE CLOUDS.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

PART I.

VII. AT THE MANSION-HOUSE.

As I followed the girl through the hall a man's voice asked—

"Is that O'Brien?"

"No," she said; "it's some one to see you, father."

She showed me into a room and closed the door, and in the course of the next few minutes I came to one or two pretty obvious conclusions. She was clearly Mr Rendall's daughter, and they were equally clearly in the habit of receiving visits at odd times from Mr O'Brien; in fact, they evidently concluded it was he, or Miss Rendall herself would scarcely have opened the door to me. Also, her reply might be taken as implying that if Mr O'Brien had been the visitor it would not have been her father he had come to see. But whether or no this were the true interpretation, I so thoroughly disliked and suspected O'Brien that any suggestion of intimacy was alone enough to make me glad I had started on the defensive.

"Otherwise," said I to myself, "what a charming girl to find in such a place!"

However, I reminded myself that I had not come here to be charmed, and proceeded next to take stock of the room.

It was not large, but pleasantly proportioned, low in the ceiling, and pervaded with a delicate yet distinct flavour of the past. I found myself instinctively wondering how one could reproduce this particular flavour on the stage; no armour or tapestry or any of the usual antique paraphernalia to be allowed, for beyond the thick walls and rather small windows it was so difficult to lay one's finger on any one specific thing that palpably suggested age. Finally, I decided that it was impossible to re-create such an atmosphere. It was compounded of stillness within and the glimpses of primeval quiet without, of a touch of comfortable shabbiness, of plenty of elderly books, and of a faint odour of the dampness of centuries mingled with the scent of honeysuckle. My suspicions were suddenly lulled, and with that prompt decision which has landed me in and pulled me out of so many holes, I decided to drop my German accent. That the charming Miss Rendall might miss it and wonder what had become of it was (I must confess) a reflection which did not occur to me till afterwards.

Just as I had come to this decision in walked the laird, and in two minutes I had come to another decision, which was

to adhere to the plan of campaign I had thought of as I walked, in so far as keeping my business to myself was concerned. My first impression of Mr Rendall was of height, and a certain quiet, formidable quality. He was grey-haired, with a close-clipped grizzled moustache, loose clothes as though he had shrunk a little in girth, and the unmistakable air of a man who had seen considerably more of the world than the island of Ransay. He received me quite politely and hospitably, but with every moment that passed I grew more acutely conscious of something deterrent behind his courtesy. A sense of a strong personality in the background, not actually hostile as yet, but ironic and critical, set me instinctively and instantly on guard. Not that I actually suspected the man, but to take him straightway into my confidence was simply impossible. A man of another temperament might have done so—and quite possibly have been right; but his effect on me was like tapping a limpet.

I gave him my name, and then I said in a quiet confidential way—

"Forgive this intrusion, Mr Rendall, but the fact is, my ship has evidently been called away."

I glanced towards the window, and following my look, he could see the smoke of the cruiser just visible on the horizon. He gave a little nod but said nothing.

"I was landed last night on a certain piece of business," I went on, "and it is no part of that business to make myself conspicuous, and so I have taken the liberty of coming to your house."

"You wish to wait here till your ship returns?" he inquired.

"I thought perhaps you might know of some lodging where I might remain quietly."

He smiled slightly.

"You had better stay here. There is no other lodging."

I began to thank him, but he cut me short.

"It is Hobson's choice," said he, "and my house is not overcrowded at present. Have you lunched?"

"I am afraid I haven't."

"Come and join us. My daughter and I had just sat down."

He moved towards the door.

"I have no luggage," I said.

"I can lend you what you want."

I thanked him again, and said brazenly—

"May I ask for the loan of a coat? I am anxious not to exhibit my uniform coat in the island if I can help it."

I thought he looked a trifle surprised (it must be remembered that all this time I was in a buttoned-up oilskin), but he merely nodded again and led me upstairs to a pleasant bedroom with a low ceiling and some heavy old-fashioned mahogany furniture. There he left me, and in a moment returned with a brush and comb and a tweed coat.

I had noticed that in one of the drawers there was a

key, and as I took the coat I said—

"I hope you won't think me unduly cautious if I lock my uniform coat up in one of these drawers. There are certain papers in the pockets which I am bound to be careful of."

Again I fancied I caught a brief look of surprise, but it must have been brief, for his face was as inscrutable as ever as he answered—

"Do exactly as you like."

A maid came with a jug of hot water and then I was alone.

"I wonder if the man believes me?" I said to myself. "Things are going a little too dashed smoothly!"

However, there was nothing for it now but playing the game out. I first took the precaution of suddenly and quietly opening the door. There was nobody at the keyhole, so I took off my oilskin and put on the tweed coat, and then locked up the top drawer and put the key in my pocket. Hardly necessary to say that drawer remained as empty as the others.

"I call that either a very neat dodge or a devilish silly one," I said to myself. "And which it is depends entirely on the results."

As I brushed my hair I thanked my stars I was fair, for a shave was now long overdue.

"What a pirate I'd look if I were a brunette!" I thought, and as it was, the recollection of dainty Miss Rendall made me determined to borrow a razor forthwith.

I foresaw that lunch would be a function demanding considerable tact. Seeing that I had decided, rightly or wrongly (and the Lord knew which!), not to trust these people, they had to be kept in a nice equilibrium betwixt doubt and confidence. To persuade them too thoroughly that they were entertaining a genuine British naval officer would be fatal if they were treasonably inclined, and a serious mistake if they were not, for then they might reassure the other islanders and my gang would go to earth, not to be dug up again in a hurry. On the other hand, to have them too suspicious would be all right if they were treasonable, but would probably end my adventure if they were honest.

The line I selected was a blend of mystery regarding my business, breezy chat on non-committal topics, and an occasional oddity of conduct, such as might have been caused by a guilty conscience or a harmless strain of eccentricity (and I left them to make their choice).

Here are a few choice excerpts from our conversation, which I happen to remember more or less verbatim.

Myself (*chattily*). "Delightful air you have in your island! Like champagne—or perhaps in these parts I ought to say like whisky-and-soda."

Mr Rendall (*somewhat drily*). "We do happen to be acquainted with champagne."

Miss Rendall (*smiling pleasantly as she hit*). "We probably don't look as though we

were, father. Mr Merton's simile was safer."

Myself (*feeling rather an ass, but outwardly gay*). "I meant no reflection on your cellar, Miss Rendall. I was merely aiming at local colour."

At this point I fell abruptly silent, the laugh, as it were, frozen on my lips. I gazed at my plate, and then glanced furtively at my host (I was giving them their choice). The next fragment of conversation which I remember ran somewhat thus—

Myself (*leading up deliberately to the test question*). "There's one thing I envy the natives of this happy island. What a wonderful show of wild flowers they have! Do they make good grazing?"

Mr Rendall (*again drily*). "If one happens to have ruminant tastes, I believe they are edible."

Miss Rendall (*brightly, but evidently unkindly*). "Mr Merton was probably thinking chiefly of the ruminant natives."

Myself (*keeping sternly to the point*). "I was thinking chiefly of sheep. (*With a direct and steady look at the laird.*) Are there many sheep on this island?"

Mr Rendall (*quite calmly*). "A good many. Are you anxious for statistics?"

Myself (*concealing my disappointment under a brave smile*). "Oh no. Please don't mistake me for an intelligent inquirer."

I turned the brave smile on to Miss Rendall. She smiled back very slightly. In her face I seemed to read a trace of scepticism,—as if she did not quite agree with my modest estimate of myself, but at the same time thought none the better of me. I would have given a good deal to know exactly what was in her mind. Did she suspect something? And if so, what?

I had one more shot. It was an inspiration which came to me at the end of lunch when my host offered me a cigar.

"Matches?" he observed, pushing a box towards me.

Again I looked at him hard and asked—

"Have you such a thing as a *wax* match?"

His eyebrows rose slightly.

"If you prefer to light a cigar with a wax match, I daresay I can find one."

"If Mr Merton doesn't mind waiting for half an hour, perhaps I might discover a box in the storeroom," said Miss Rendall; and she added demurely, "beside the champagne."

My only consolation was that I was making an idiot of myself in a good cause.

VIII. SUNDAY.

I said good-night early that evening, and did a heap of thinking in my bedroom. Nothing that seems to me now to be worth recording had been said or done since

luncheon. I went for a solitary walk in the afternoon, as much to carry out the part of one with some business in the isle as for any other reason. It is true I actually did do some business in the way of accosting a few inhabitants and trying tactfully to convey a suspicious impression. None of them, however, had seemed in the least likely to belong to the gang I was after, and the sheep and wax-match conundrums had left them cold. I was the less concerned at this, since I had realised that the day was Saturday. To-morrow in church I meant to take stock of the islanders, and give them a chance of taking stock of me.

That night my thoughts ran chiefly on my host and hostess. I had learnt a few more facts about them, and these I now put together to see what picture they suggested. In the first place, the Rendalls were an ancient family in these parts, and had owned their property for some centuries. As all my prejudices ran in favour of old families, old port, and old furniture, this was so far reassuring.

On the other hand, Mr Rendall had apparently lived much abroad, but he dropped no hint as to whether he had sojourned in foreign parts for reasons of pleasure, health, or business. In fact he was close as a clam on the subject, and, indeed, on every other subject. Add to this that I had heard he was hard up, that he had no wife to look after him, and that he evidently took a caustic rather than an enthusiastic view of life, and in my present state of mind there seemed a *prima facie* case for suspicion. Anyhow he was a man to be watched.

As to his daughter, I had learned that her name was Jean, that she had been to school at a somewhat select seminary which I chanced to have heard of, and that she had finished her education a couple of years ago in Switzerland.

"Nothing very suspicious in all that," I thought. "Still, what is this surprising apparition doing in this out-of-the-way island? 'Looking after my father,' she'd say. But why look after him here instead of some more amusing place? Perhaps because they are hard up. On the other hand, perhaps not."

Then I thought over the pair simply as one thought of any new acquaintances before war was dreamt of, and I am bound to say they came out of the ordeal very creditably. He was well-born, well-bred, and very far from a fool. She was—well, I don't mind confessing that that night I considered her charming, in spite of the pretty obvious fact that she was not at all charmed with me. Or if she was, she concealed her feelings admirably. She had a good enough excuse, either way; whether she were honest and thought me a traitor, or whether she were treacherous and thought me honest. Besides, I had not yet shaved.

So I forgave Miss Jean her prejudice, and reflected on her attractions. I changed my mind about them later, as will appear; but that first evening she seemed to me a most piquante and dainty young lady. Slim, trim, and demure, with eyes like stars (I borrowed the simile unblushingly), and a pleasant spice of mischief in her tongue, and a touch of the devil very carefully and properly hidden away,—that was my first impression of Miss Jean Rendall.

And then I turned in, and slept that night without a dream.

Sunday was another gorgeous day. The breeze had almost quite died away, the sea glimmered through a heat-haze, and the colours of the wild flowers were brighter than any palette. I came down shaved, but found Miss Rendall still cool, and her father as inaccessible as ever.

"Anyhow," I consoled myself by reflecting, "I have eliminated my bristles as a cause for my unpopularity. They have something else on their minds!"

The laird lent me a felt hat, and as the hour of noon drew nigh we set off for the parish kirk. There was another church in the island (as in every self-respecting Scottish parish, I believe), but by the greatest good luck the rival minister was away and the congregations were assembled together. I gathered afterwards that this happy result was partly due to the hope of seeing the laird's mysterious guest, and that several very prickly theological scruples were swallowed by divers of the other congregation. At all events the church was crowded, and I had the chance I wanted.

As we approached the kirk I thought I had never seen a plainer, more primitive little building even in a Scottish kirkyard: no spire, no ornament, nothing but grey roughcast walls (what they call in Scotland "harled") and a roof of small yellowish flagstones, set in a bed of mingled nettles and tombstones. Amid the tombstones stood the congregation, all in black and staring steadfastly at the mysterious stranger, while over the door a plaintive bell creaked and clanged.

We entered the little church, and I shall never forget my surprise. It was the year 1914 without; it became the year 1514 (or perhaps some centuries earlier still) within. On one side two minute windows pierced a wall quite four feet thick. The other wall was broken only by a great empty niche whence an image once adored had vanished. It is true there were now pews, but they were not of yesterday—square boxes, where people sat and faced in four directions, and the odour of damp Bibles smelt prehistoric.

The bell ceased clanging, the people trooped in and filled the boxes, and presently there uprose in the pulpit a grim, venerable man in black. By this time my

better feelings were under control, and I studied this figure critically. He represented one of those four "civilised" and suspect houses. One was untenanted, two I had now visited, and the fourth I was now almost ready to discharge with a cleared character. Outwardly, at least, this sedate divine suggested nothing but the austerer virtues.

For two hours the minister prayed, the minister read, and the minister preached to us; at intervals we were allowed to sing, and abused the privilege shockingly; and all the time I studied that congregation. I recognised the Scollay family — Peter elder, Peter younger, Mrs Scollay, the two rosy daughters, and even poor Jock. The three or four people I had spoken to in the afternoon were all there too. In fact I saw every one I had consciously met before in that island, with three exceptions. The doctor and O'Brien were not in church, and, narrowly though I looked, I saw no sign of the ancient with tinted spectacles and a taste for wax matches.

I very soon was made aware that there was no fear of myself going unobserved. At one time or another I caught every eye in that congregation riveted on me, and it only remained for me to give the proper impression to carry away with them.

As I was unable to see myself as others saw me, I cannot say precisely what effect I produced; but if a habit of looking suddenly and guiltily at the floor when I caught a hard-staring eye, a conspicuous difficulty in following the order of the service and knowing what book to be picked up, and whether to kneel, sit, or stand, and a peculiarly unpleasant shake which I introduced into my top note — if all these manifestations failed to convey the impression that I was a very suspicious person indeed, well, all I can say is that they ought to have, and that that congregation must have been singularly deficient in the proper kind of imagination. Of course I could hardly expect a sympathetic signal to be actually made in church, but I did hope my performance would surely bear fruit before many hours had passed.

At last the service ended, the commons crowded out, and the laird and his daughter rose in their wake and greeted the minister on their way to the door. I noticed that they did not introduce me, and also that the Reverend Mr Mackenzie regarded me—over Miss Rendall's shoulder—with a sternly suspicious glance. Evidently he had heard ill of me already, and hope burned higher. If the minister had heard dark rumours, surely the spies had! Or anyhow they would when that congregation had all reached their homes (if they were not among the congregation themselves).

We passed again through many eyes in the kirkyard, and then the Rev. Mr Mackenzie and the laird walked together

for a short way, and I found myself alone with Miss Jean.

"I didn't see Dr Rendall or Mr O'Brien in church," I remarked.

"They very seldom come to church," said she.

"I gather that Mr O'Brien is visiting the doctor," I observed.

"Yes," said she in a tone that promised little further information.

"Has he been staying with him long?" I persevered.

"For some time."

"Old friends, I suppose."

She did not seem to hear me, and I gave it up—in the meanwhile; but to myself I said complacently—

"Some mystery here!"

Presently I remarked—

"There was another face I didn't see—the island patriarch."

She looked at me quickly.

"The patriarch—who do you mean?"

"An old gentleman with a white beard, tinted spectacles, and overcoat somewhat the worse for wear. He hailed me on the road yesterday and asked for a match. I imagine he must live somewhere near the doctor's house."

She looked very thoughtful for a moment and then said—

"There is no one in the island with tinted spectacles, and nobody in the least like that living anywhere near Dr Rendall's."

I looked at her sharply.

"Are you quite sure?"

She seemed to think again for a moment, and then said—

"Perfectly."

I had something to think about on my way home to lunch.

IX. AN ALLY.

After lunch I set out by myself with pretty high hopes. It seemed to me inconceivable that men (or even one man, for the sake of argument, though I felt sure there must be more) who were lurking here on the business this gang were engaged upon would actually take no steps one way or the other to deal with a stranger who knew of their existence, and who to all seeming was one of their own kidney. I flattered myself by this time that every report they could have heard and every observation they might have made must incline them to the view that it was their duty to get in touch with me again. And now I proposed to take a solitary ramble along the very shore where I had stumbled upon my oilskinned friend and give them a chance of getting in touch.

It was an afternoon of sunshine and gleaming seas. At first the air was redolent of clover, and then—as I drew near the shore—of sea-ware. On this day of rest there was hardly any one to be seen about, so that a quiet meeting by the beach could be simply arranged. Only a meeting implies two, and though I walked right along the coast till I got within a stone's-throw of the Scollays'

farm, I remained as solitary as when I started.

I turned back, and slowly retraced my steps for a mile or so, my hopes fading and my perplexity increasing.

"What ought I to have done that I haven't done?" I asked myself. "And what have I done that I oughtn't to?"

I paused and sat down on the crisp sea turf with a rough stone wall to landward, and below me the shelving rocks and the glassy ocean; and it was then the idea struck me that I might do something to attract attention to my presence. A thoughtful aunt had presented me with a revolver when I got my commission, and as anything to do with hitting things, from cricket-balls to pheasants, has always amused me, I used to carry it in my hip-pocket regardless of chaff (one happily inspired wag dubbed me "Jolly Roger"). I took it out now, descended to the beach, set up a stone as a mark, and proceeded to combine business with pleasure by doing a little fancy shooting. The thing made just enough noise to attract anybody fairly near at hand without scandalising the inhabitants, and as I chanced to be in good form, I quite enjoyed myself.

I had just brought off a pretty sequence of snapshots, and was thinking regretfully that in one of the happy lands which still encouraged the duel I should be a much more respected member of society, when I suddenly realised that I had a spectator of my prowess. He was standing on the turf above me, a little indistinct owing to the wall at his back, and for an instant my heart leapt, and I thought I had met the friend I was seeking at last. And then I saw that it was only poor Jock.

I waved to him, and he came scrambling down to the beach, his mouth wide open as usual and wreathed in smiles. As he approached, a wild thought struck me. He was bearded, thick-set, and of medium height. Wrap him in an oilskin, and there you were! I mention all my inspirations to show that I really did cover the ground pretty thoroughly in that island. It is true that the conduct of my oilskinned acquaintance was scarcely that of a congenital idiot; still, I was resolved to leave no stone unturned.

"Shoots, shoots!" he babbled in his curious thick voice. "Jock heard shoots!"

I looked at him fixedly, and in a serious voice and a German accent you could have cut with a knife replied—

"I vant to know zomezing about sheeps, Herr Jock, not about shoots. How many sheeps are zere in zis island, eh?"

Did I see a gleam of intelligence for an instant in Jock's eye? I cannot honestly say. I only know that he looked not unnaturally surprised, and then thickly answered what sounded like "A hundred and six." Anyhow, it was nothing

that seemed to illuminate the subject.

"And how many wax matches?" I inquired.

Jock hooted with laughter. He sounded so cheerful that I perforce laughed too, and then I gazed at him sombrely.

"Jock," I said, "you are a fraud and a disappointment."

He laughed again, and then all at once a much more sensible idea struck me. He was not a very promising ally, but he might prove better than none at all.

"Jock," said I, "I am a stranger."

He nodded, and seemed to understand.

"Have you seen any other strangers in this island of yours?" I asked.

He seemed a little confused.

"No, no," he began, and then altered it into "Yes, yes."

Which did he mean, or did he mean anything at all?

"A man in an oilskin coat, with a moustache on his lip—here," I went on, touching my own lip, "who goes out at night and walks along the shore; have you seen any one like that?"

Again he seemed to look intelligent, but he only shook his head vaguely.

"Well," I said, "if you do see any one like that let me know, and you will see some more shoots. Also, I shall give you this."

I held up a new half-crown, and he laughed so joyfully that I began to have a faint hope he might prove of some use after all.

And yet when I had left him and resumed my walk back to the Rendalls' house, my spirits were not very high. As an ally Jock did not impress me with a feeling of great confidence, while his failure to recognise my description of the oilskinned man depressed me unreasonably. I told myself that the opinion of the parish idiot on the subject of strangers was of small value. Besides, quite likely the oilskinned man would not be a stranger to the people in the neighbourhood. They might know him familiarly as a prosperous farmer, or a hardy fisherman—or as their own doctor, or their doctor's guest, or—no, he could not be their laird, for Mr Rendall was too tall. In short, my talk with Jock had proved nothing one way or the other.

And yet my whole failure to come upon any trace of the gang, in spite of all my ingenuity, did set me thinking. Could it possibly be that my entire adventure had been a hallucination? I confessed frankly to myself that I have a pretty lively imagination, and I recalled vividly how I had almost collapsed on my way to the Scollays under the strain of an intense reaction, how my brain had whirled, and how I peopled the farm kitchen with full thrice the number of persons actually assembled. I had been conscious of all that; but supposing my brain had actually begun to whirl half an hour sooner, before I had become conscious of it? Might I not

have imagined my whole mysterious adventure?

It was a nasty thought, for in that case what a superfluous fool I had made of myself since! But I faced it manfully, and sternly asked myself what the opinion of the average hard-headed, soberly-reasoning man would be if he were given the facts, and requested to pronounce his verdict on them. What would be my own verdict if I were told such a yarn? Would I swallow it without demur?

"Be hanged if I would!" I said candidly.

By the time I got back to the big house, I had very nearly ceased to believe in the tale myself.

X. THE COAST PATROL.

That evening we were all three sitting in the library (the same old-world room into which I had first been shown), when a servant entered and gave a message to Mr Rendall. He rose and went out, leaving his daughter and myself each apparently immersed in a book. She may genuinely have been, but I was making the covers of mine a screen for inward debate. Had I made a mere fool of myself, and should I make a clean breast of everything to my hosts? Or should I wait a little longer before deciding? I went on thinking after the laird had left the room, and Miss Jean still kept her eyes immovably on her page. I frankly confess I have never cut less ice with any woman — especially one who decidedly attracted me.

In a few minutes her father returned, and said to her—

"John Howieson has cried off to-night. I must go myself."

She started up with a word of expostulation, but he merely smiled in his grim way, nodded at her (not at me, I noticed), and was gone. With a little sigh she sat down again and plunged into her book, but my curiosity had been roused, and in a moment I inquired—

"Is your father going out for long?"

Her concern seemed to have broken down her reticence.

"All night," she said. "I wish he wouldn't!"

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"The coast patrol," said she.

"The coast patrol!" I exclaimed. "What's that?"

She seemed to look at me for an instant a little doubtfully before she answered.

"The Admiralty have asked all the Justices of Peace to have the coast patrolled."

"By whom?"

"Anybody they can get. We have the whole island mapped out into beats, and the different farmers take it night about."

For the moment I only half believed her. Such an amateur way of keeping watch and ward in such a vital area seemed hardly credible, but I learned afterwards that in

those early days of the war that was one of the things which actually happened. Another fact also made me doubtful. On the night I landed I had met no watchers.

"Who watches the shore up at the north end—near the Scollays' farm?" I asked.

"Oh, Dr Rendall and Mr O'Brien look after that beat," said she.

In a flash my belief in my own adventure had begun to return. Either that couple neglected their duty—or I had met one of the watchers!

"Do the doctor and Mr O'Brien ever go out themselves—like your father to-night?" I asked.

"Mr O'Brien goes out pretty often, I believe."

I thought for a moment longer, and then I jumped up.

"This seems the very job for an able-bodied young man," I said with a laugh. "I'm going out to join the watchers!"

"You!" she exclaimed, springing up too.

I looked her straight in the eye.

"Why not me?" I inquired.

She said nothing for an instant, and then she remarked in quite a matter-of-fact voice—

"Very well; if you are going, I'll come with you."

I could not resist parodying her.

"You!" I exclaimed.

But I got no smile in response.

"I'll be ready in five minutes," she said as she left the room.

"Now, what the devil does this mean?" I said to myself.

Five minutes of course meant quarter of an hour, and then we sallied forth into the night, she in a long tweed coat and I in my inevitable oilskin.

"Which way do you want to go?" she asked.

"Suppose we work our way towards the north end," I suggested.

She said nothing more, and we made our way by a track to the shore, and then turned towards the left. I had been filling my pipe, and when we got to the last stone wall I stopped, bent under its shelter, and struck a match. My face was towards her, and in the fraction of a second before the first match blew out I caught the glimpse of something just visible in the mouth of one of the big pockets of her tweed coat. It was the butt-end of a pistol.

I struck three more matches before I got my pipe alight, and I contrived to face her each time, but she had turned and kept her other side towards me. When we resumed our walk I noticed that she consistently kept two or three yards away from me.

"Just shooting distance!" I said to myself.

"By the way, what are we supposed to be looking for?" I inquired presently.

"Chiefly periscopes, I think," said she.

I stopped short and gazed over the inky sea.

"Do they light them up for us?" I asked.

She laughed despite herself.

"That is what I've been wondering myself," said she.

This was her only sympathetic relapse, and, to tell the truth, I made no further remark worthy of being smiled at. That pistol kept me thinking. That she had come out to watch me, and if necessary shoot me, seemed a pretty obvious deduction, and, much as I admired her nerve, it made humorous conversation a trifle difficult.

On we walked—on and on for what seemed an interminable distance. It was quite moonless, and only a few stars twinkled here and there through a veil of light clouds that had drifted up with the sunset. The grass underfoot was black, the sea was nearly as dark, and the inland country invisible. Once I remarked—

"It's a curious thing that we haven't met any of our fellow-watchers."

"The beats are very long," she said, "and I'm afraid all the watchers don't keep at their posts all the time."

"What! they take a nap now and then?"

She seemed as though she were going to agree, and then to change her mind.

"Oh, we shall meet some one very soon. I think father is taking this beat."

But we met no one, and as we pursued our lonely way I began to think that here was quite a possible reason for my not having come upon one of these coast patrols two nights ago. Still, it was only a possible reason; the other alternative remained.

And then, I know not how it was, but I began gradually to get a curious impression that *something* was in the air, *something* was going to happen. It is easy to say I only imagine now in the retrospect that I had this feeling. But I noted the sensation clearly and positively at the time. I strained my eyes, I looked this way and that, so strong did the feeling become. Once I thought for a moment I heard soft footsteps somewhere on the inland side, and I stopped short then and listened; but when I stopped I heard nothing.

It can only have been a few minutes after this that the figure at my side (which had been so silent that I had almost forgotten it was a girl, and a pretty girl too) stopped suddenly, and I stood still beside her.

"Do you hear anything?" she asked, and there seemed to be a little catch in her breath.

I listened, and shook my head. I could see that she was gazing intently down at the beach.

"Do you see anything?" I asked in a voice instinctively hushed.

"No," she answered in the same low tone, "but I thought I heard something."

Again I strained my ears, and this time I distinctly did

hear something; it might have been a movement among the rocks below or on the bank ahead of us. She said nothing more, but she seemed to be peering down into the gloom that veiled the beach.

"I'll go down and see what it is," I said.

For an instant I thought she was going to demur; but she said nothing, and with a bold air I stepped off the turf and began to make my way down — first through loose boulders, and then along a ledge below. I confess frankly that I felt a trifle less bold than I looked, especially when I discovered the hazardous nature of the going. I remember that the sky began to seem lighter by contrast, but that the rocks were sheer chaotic darkness.

I must have been feeling my way along for some minutes, with a growing sense of the futility of the performance, when I first heard the sharp tinkle of a loose stone on rock. I turned towards the sound and heard it again. Either three or four times I had heard it distinctly when I found myself close to the grass again, only at this place there was a steep little cliff, higher than my head, between it and me, instead of a slope of boulders, so that any one on the bank above would be looking straight down on to me. All this I can swear to.

And then when my shoulder was rubbing this low cliff face, I thought—indeed I am sure—I heard something move above, and certainly there was a sharp grating sound on the rock at my back—within an inch of me it seemed. I looked round quickly just in time to catch a glimpse of something thin and curved and sinister passing upwards against the night sky; I did not see it descend again, but the next moment came the sharp grating, close to my head this time, and once more the long curved menace passed up, faintly visible against the sky.

I did not wait for it to descend again. That somebody was striking at me from above, and that I had better get out of the way, seemed so evident that I spent no further time in watching the operation. I started from the cliff, my feet struck a patch of seaweed, and with a half-smothered "Damn!" I did the next few yards sliding seawards on my side. A peculiarly hard ledge stopped my career, and for a moment I lay there wondering what bones were broken. By the time I had found there were none and scrambled to my feet the skyline above the bank was clear. Whoever had struck at me was gone, and there was not even the slightest sound save the gurgling of the sea below. And then I gingerly picked my way back.

I drew near the turf bank at the top, and now again I stopped. Low voices reached my ear distinctly, and presently I spied two vague forms standing close together. Before I moved again I had transferred something from my hip pocket

to my oilskin jacket, and I kept my hand there too, closed upon it and ready. Then I advanced.

"Is that you, Mr Merton?" said a voice I knew.

"It is, Mr Rendall," I answered drily.

"Did you see anybody?"

"No," I answered truthfully.

"We thought we heard a cry," said Miss Jean.

"I may have startled a seagull," I suggested; and then I asked with a sharpness in my voice I could not quite control, "Where did Mr Rendall spring from?"

"I told you I thought we should meet him," she answered, with a cool note in her voice that countered mine.

"What a curious chance that we should all meet here!" I exclaimed.

"It is precisely what I expected," said she.

"Did you think, then, it was Mr Rendall down among the rocks?" I inquired.

"No," she said, "and it wasn't."

"Oh," I replied in a tone which (if I achieved my intention) might have meant anything—or nothing.

Her father had been standing perfectly silent during this bout, a towering figure muffled in a heavy ulster and scarf, with the rim of his hat turned down over his face. Now he spoke in his dry caustic way.

"Have you had enough exercise, Mr Merton?"

"Quite, thank you."

"Then we can all go back together."

He turned, and his daughter took his arm. I walked behind them—it seemed on the whole safer—and I kept my hand in my pocket all the while.

I had seen no one, it is true; I had heard no sound that could be sworn to as made by a human being; the thing I saw so dimly might possibly not have been a lethal weapon (and if it was a weapon, what in heaven's name could it be? I wondered); it might conceivably have been a large bird some distance off, just as by a reverse illusion men are said to have fired at bumble-bees when grouse-driving. Also, it was within the bounds of possibility that the tinkling stones might not have been thrown down by some one above in order to draw me under that face. Everything had been so vague that all these alternatives were conceivable.

But my own mind was quite and finally determined now that my adventure with the stranger on the shore had been no figment of my fancy, and I felt sure, moreover, that *they* had made up their minds about me and decided to act. How and why they had come to such a definite conclusion, despite all my efforts to mislead them, beat me at first completely. And then I stopped short, and almost shouted "Idiot!"

I had addressed Miss Rendall at her own door in a German accent. Then I had abruptly dropped it, and

through all my deliberate mystifications one fact had been clear — that I spoke in the accents of an ordinary more or less educated Englishman. The Rendalls clearly had the material for coming to a conclusion, and now in their company I had all but ended my days on earth.

Yet somehow or other, now that I saw all this so clearly, I found myself singularly reluctant to accept the logical conclusion that this gentleman of good lineage and standing, and this attractive high-spirited girl, were actually traitors of the basest sort, and murderous traitors too.

"Hang it, I may be wrong after all!" I said to myself. "I know I'm young: I am told I'm rash; I have made a fool of myself periodically as long as I've known myself. I'll give them the benefit of the doubt a little longer."

At the door Mr Rendall left us to resume his conscientious patrol. I said a brief and cool good-night to Jean, went up to my room, and tumbled straight into bed.

"In the morning I'll think things over," I decided.

(To be continued.)

"USQUE AB OVO."

BY "BARTIMEUS."

REMINISCENCES of those days "in the distance enchanted" never come in an orderly procession according to the original sequence of events. Some, for reasons quite inexplicable, jostle their way to the fore readily enough. Others, dim and elusive, hover in the background, and only respond to the lure of firelight and tobacco smoke ascending incensewise from the depths of the armchair.

Sooner or later, though, they can all be caught and held for the moment needed to record them. The difficulty is to know where to start. . . .

Harker is foremost among the "thrusters" in the surging crowd of memories of the old *Britannia* days. Harker, with his piercing, rather melancholy eyes, his black beard and tattooed wrists, and his air of implacable ferocity that for months succeeded in concealing from his term a heart as tender as a woman's.

His name was not actually Harker, of course; but he is probably still alive, and even retired chief petty officers of the Royal Navy have their susceptibilities. He was a term C.P.O. — mentor, wet-nurse, "sea-daddy," the outward and visible embodiment of Naval Discipline to sixty-odd Naval Cadets who yesterday were raw schoolboys and to-day wear the King's uniform and eke brass buttons—a transition unhinging enough to more matured souls than those of his charges.

How he succeeded in conveying within the space of the first evening the exceedingly unfamiliar routine of trainingship life, the art of turning into a hammock, the necessity for keeping their chests locked, the majesty of the term lieutenant, and the omnipotence of the chief cadet captains, to sixty bewildered fifteen-year-olds, only he knows.

Yet he harried none; they were conscious of him as a flock of disconcerted sheep are aware of a wise collie. His voice was never still: it was to be presumed that he slept at some mysterious time during the twenty-four hours, and yet his square compact form seemed to be always drifting about at all hours of the day and night. Even when a hapless wight (in the throes of nightmare) tipped bodily out of his hammock on to the deck during the first night, it was Harker who appeared noiselessly out of the shadows to tuck him in again.

Their names he had pat within twenty-four hours; this tightened his grip of the term instantly, but it also caused him to be regarded as scarcely canny. Indeed it was disconcerting enough to regard yourself one moment as an insignificant and unknown unit among 250 others, and in this

comfortable reflection to lean in a *dégagé* attitude against the white paint-work (one of the seven deadly sins): then to hear admonition and your name, coupled together like chain-shot, ring out along the crowded main deck. Harker had seen you.

There were other C.P.O.'s on board: each term owned one. But they were, by comparison with Harker, sorry fellows. One, in a scarlet jersey, was reputed to be given to beating the big drum at Salvation Army meetings ashore. Hotly his term denied it, but the story was stamped with the unimpeachable authority of the boatswain's mate of the lower deck: a godless seaman, conversation with whom, being of a spicy and anecdotal nature, was forbidden.

Another was admittedly of a good enough heart, but a sentimentalist, and consequently to be despised. On the occasion of the chastisement of an evil-doer, his was the arm chosen to administer the strokes with all the pomp and circumstance of an official execution. He laid the strokes on well and truly—that much the victim himself admitted. But when he turned from his duty his eyes were observed to have tears in them. His term had in consequence to adopt an apologetic manner for a considerable time afterwards.

It was a similar scene, but one in which Harker played the Lord High Executioner, that must here be recorded. The setting alone was sufficient to strike awe and even terror into the spectators' hearts. And now, after the lapse of years, recalling the circumstances of that harrowing quarter of an hour, it is doubtful whether there was not just some such motive behind the grim circumstance that led up to the painful consummation.

The scene was the orlop deck. What light there was came in through the open gun-ports, slanting upwards off the water. Not cheering sunlight, you understand, but a greenish sickly gleam that struggled ineffectually with the shadows clinging like vampires among the low oak beams overhead.

The victim's term were fallen-in in a hollow square about the horse—a block of wood supported on short legs with ring-bolts and canvas straps hanging from each corner. Then there came a pause. Possibly the captain had not finished his breakfast; or perhaps Harker had for once made a mistake and got his term there too early. But for the space of several minutes (or weeks, or years) the term stood in shuddering contemplation of this engine.

Then one of the spectators, the victim of either an over-rich imagination or an acutely sensitive conscience, dramatically fainted and was borne forth. After that things began to happen. The malefactor appeared, accompanied by Harker. The captain, the term lieutenant, and (a thrill ran through the onlookers) the

surgeon followed. It was half expected that the chaplain would also join the group and administer ghostly consolation to the culprit, who, it must be reluctantly admitted, looked rather pleased with himself.

His offence was not one to alienate him from the hearts of his fellows. If memory serves aright, he had been overheard to refer to his late crammer in terms that may or may not have been just, but were certainly not the way a little gentleman should talk. But his term—or most of them—were still smarting under the recollections of crammers' methods, and were disposed to regard the delinquent's lapse rather more as a pardonable ebullition of feeling than a breach of morality. In short, he was a bit of a hero.

"Chief Petty Officer Harker," said the stern voice of the term lieutenant, "do your duty." The harrowing preliminaries completed, Chief Petty Officer Harker did it, as was to be expected of him, uncommonly well.

The victim took it, as was also to be expected of him, uncommonly well. It was not long before these lines were written that he was called upon to meet a sterner and his last ordeal. The pity is that no spectator can bear testimony to the worthier courage with which he must have met it.

Harker it was who smelt out, like a Zulu witch-doctor, the grass snake and dormouse that lived a life of communistic ease and reflection in the washing till of some one's sea-chest. Harker's the suspicious mind that led to official ruxes of private tills, and the confiscation of meerschaum pipes, Turkish cigarettes, and other contraband. Yet all this without any effect of espionage.

The nearest approach to active espionage that Harker permitted himself was hovering in the vicinity of the gangway when the terms were landed for daily recreation. The law of the Medes and Persians had it that during cold weather all cadets not playing games must land wearing a particularly despicable form of under-garment: a woolly and tucked-into-the-socks abomination that the soul of every right-minded cadet revolted from. As the procession passed under the low gangway on its way to the launches alongside, Harker, lurking in the vicinity, would suddenly pounce upon a suspect.

"'Ave we got our DRAWERS on, Mr So-and-So?" came the merciless query. The progress of the procession was arrested while Mr So-and-So racked his brains for some suitable parry to this very leading question. A damning negative having eventually been extorted, the underclad one was hauled from the ranks and given three minutes in which to get to his chest, extract from his wardrobe the garment that found such high favour in Olympian eyes, put it on, and rejoin the tail of the procession. Thus a first offender: a second offence

resulted in "no landing." There was no appeal.

The muddy, tired, ever-hungry throng that returned some three hours later, again passed on board under this lynx-eyed surveillance. This time illicit "stodge" was the subject of Harker's unquenchable suspicions.

Smuggling stodge on board (another of the seven deadly sins) required considerable ingenuity, owing to the ban the authorities thought necessary to impose on pockets. Regular outfitters pandered to this Olympian whim, and constructed trousers with an embryonic fob just large enough to hold a few coins. The unorthodox, who arrived with garments bearing the stamp of provincialism and pockets, were bidden to surrender them forthwith, and stout fingers ruthlessly sewed them up.

The jacket had only one, a breast pocket already congested by keys, handkerchief, letters from home, pet bits of indiarubber, and the like. Remained therefore the despised garment already alluded to. This, being tucked—by official decree—into the wearer's socks, formed an admirable hold-all for a packet of butter-scotch—worked flat—a snack of Turkish Delight, or a peculiar and highly favoured form of delicacy known as "My Queen."

With a not too saintly expression, an unflinching eye, and a sufficiently baggy pair of trousers, the contrabandist might count on a reasonable amount of success. But Harker's X-ray glance rarely failed him.

That stern incisive voice would rivet all eyes upon the culprit just when the muster by the officer of the day had been completed, and the long ranks awaited the stentorian dismissal of the chief cadet captain.

"Mr Z! You'll step along to the sick-bay when we falls out."

The blanched smuggler clutched at his momentarily abandoned halo of rectitude.

"Sick-bay!" he echoed indignantly. "Why the sick-bay? There's nothing wrong with me—I swear there isn't. I never felt better in my life."

"That there nasty swelling on your shin," was the pitiless reply, "did ought to be seen to at once." A draught, that had fluttered the carefully selected baggy trousers against their wearer's legs, had been his undoing. The game was up.

Like all truly great men, Harker could unbend without discipline suffering an iota. As the months passed and his term of fledgling "News" acquired the modest dignity of "Threes" (second term cadets), Harker's methods changed. He was no longer the detective, inquisitor, encyclopædia of a thousand unfamiliar phrases, events, and objects. His term were on their feet now, treading in their turn paths fiercely illumined by the new first term's gaping admiration and curiosity. They were an example.

"'Ow long 'ave we been in

the *Britannia?*" he would demand reproachfully when some breach of the laws called for reproof. "'Ere we are in our second term, an' talkin' about HUP-STAIRS!"

The scorn in his voice was like a whip-lash.

"When you young gentlemen goes to sea you won't find no STAIRS!"

When they went to sea! That was the gradually increasing burden of his song. For a while it presented a picture too remote almost for serious contemplation. It was practically a figure of speech, meaningless. But as time went on, and the successive dignities of "Sixer" and "Niner" (third and fourth—the last—terms) loomed up and passed into reality, and at last the Great Wall of the final examination alone stood between them and the sea-going gunrooms of the Fleet, the words took on their real significance.

Harker abandoned even sarcasm. He became guide, philosopher, and friend, a patient mentor always accessible—generally somewhere on the chest-deck—in leisure hours to thirsters after knowledge. Was one shaky in that branch of nautical lore known as "Bends and Hitches"? Harker's blunt fingers tirelessly manipulated the end of a hammock-lashing until the pupil could make even a "sheep-shank" with his eyes shut.

Another would bring him, in a welter of grease and ravelled strands, a tortured mass of hemp-rope.

"It's meant to be a Long Splice," was the explanation, "but I don't seem to get it right—ever," and with a despondent sigh it would be thrust into Harker's hands.

Harker would examine the interwoven strands, twisting them to and fro with jerks of his powerful wrists, pulling taut here, tucking something in there, and lo! the thing took shape.

"This is where you goes wrong, Mr P., every time!" (Recollect there were sixty-odd in his term.) "Don't forget what I'm always telling you. You splits the middle strands, and then an over-'and knot in the opposite 'alves . . ." It always looked so easy when Harker did it.

It was during the last night on board that Harker rose to heights truly magnanimous. The fourth term regarded it as its right and privilege, on the last night of the term, to hold high carnival until sleep overtook them. Cadet captains even cast their responsibilities to the winds that night and scampered about, slim pyjama-clad figures, in the dim light of the lanterns, ruthlessly cutting down the prig who yearned for slumber, lashing up a victim in his hammock and leaving him upside-down to reflect on certain deeds of the past year that earned him this retribution, floating about on gratings on the surface of the plunge-baths, and generally celebrating in a fitting manner the eve of the day that was to herald in new responsibilities and cares.

Harker, who for fifteen months had haunted the shadows on the look-out for just such a "rux," whose ear caught every illicit sound—even the crunch of the nocturnal butter-scotch—Harker was for once unseeing and unseen. It needed but this crowning act of grace to endear him for ever to his departing flock.

Yet he had one more card to play, and played it as he passed in farewell from carriage to carriage of the departing train. Further, he dealt it with accentuated emphasis for the benefit of those he thought needed the reminder most.

"Gosh!" ejaculated such an one when Harker passed to the next carriage: he flopped back on to his seat. "Did you hear? He said 'Sir' to each one of us when he said good-bye!"

So much for Harker. But he brought with him a number of other memories entangled somehow about his personality, and on these it may be as well to enlarge a little ere they slip back into the limbo of the forgotten past.

It says much for the vividness of Harker's personality that he outran in these reminiscences the memory of "Stodge." Certainly few interests loomed larger on the horizon of these days than the contents of the two canteens ashore.

There was one adjacent to the landing-place: a wise forethought of the authorities, enabling a fellow to stay his stomach during the long climb from the river to the playing-fields, where the principal canteen stood.

"Stodge" was of a surpassing cheapness. That much was essential when the extent of the weekly pocket-money was limited (if memory is to be trusted) to one shilling. Further, it was of a pleasing variety, certain peculiar combinations, hallowed by tradition, being alone unchanging.

Of these the most popular was the "Garry Sandwich." Components: a half-stick of chocolate-cream sandwiched between two "squashed-fly" biscuits; the whole beaten thin with a cricket-bat, gymnasium shoe, or other implement handy. The peculiarity of this particular form of dainty was that it sufficed as an unfailing bribe wherewith to open negotiations with one Dunn, the septuagenarian keeper of the boat-house. The moral atmosphere of this haunt, in consequence of its custodian's sweetness of tooth, came in time to resemble that of a Chinese yamen.

Another delicacy, about which legend clustered, was the "Ship's Bun," split in half, with a liberal cementing of Devonshire cream and strawberry-jam oozing out at the sides. Concerning the bun itself, the maternal solicitude of the authorities extended one gratis to each cadet ashore on half-holidays, lest the impecunious should hunger unnecessarily between lunch and tea. The buns were obtainable on application at the counter, whence the daughter

of the proprietor — whom we will call Maunder—was charged with the duty of issuing them.

How she pretended to remember the two and a half hundred faces that presented themselves in surging crowds round the counter at 4 P.M., is more than her present recorder can say. But even as she extended a bun to the outstretched grubby hand of a suppliant, an expression of vixen-like indignation and cunning would transform her features.

"You've 'ad a bun afore!" she would snap shrilly, withdrawing the bounty in the nick of time. The hungry petitioner, cheerfully acknowledging defeat in a game of bluff, would then withdraw, pursued by Miss Maunder's invectives.

All the same she was not infallible, and on occasions hot protestations and even mutual recrimination rang to and fro across the counter. Appeal, ultimately carried to Mr Maunder, was treated in much the same way as it is by croupiers at Monte Carlo. A gentleman's word is his word. But it is as well not to be the victim of too many mistakes.

Maunder, who was occupied with the stern responsibility of catering for the whim of the rich, had a way of recapitulating the orders from the beginning, adding up aloud as the count went on, thus:—

Cadet. A strawberry ice, please, Maunder.

Maunder. One strawberry ice tuppence.

Cadet. Oh, and a doughnut, while you're about it.

Maunder. One strawberry ice one doughnut thruppence.

Cadet. That's just to go on with. Then in a bag I want a stick of cream chocolate.

Maunder. One strawberry ice, one doughnut, one stick cream chocolate, fourpence.

Cadet (breathlessly). And a bottle of barley-sugar and a "My Queen," and four Garry biscuits, and half a pound of cherries and a bottle of lemonade, and one of ginger-beer and—that's all, I think.

Maunder (coming in a little behind, chanting, the general effect being that of a duet in cannon). One strawberry ice, one doughnut, one stick cream-chocolate, one bottle barley-sugar, one "My Queen," &c., &c., &c. . . . And a bag one an' thruppence 'a'penny. . . . Thank you, sir. Next, please.

On occasion demigods walked among the children of men. The visits of the Channel Fleet to Torbay usually brought over one or two of a lately departed term, now midshipmen by the grace of God, and magnificent beyond conception.

It was their pleasure, these immaculately-clad visitors, to enter the canteen, greet Maunder with easy familiarity, and Miss Maunder with something approaching gallantry, slap down a sovereign on the counter, and cry free stodge all round. They would even unbend further, dallying with a strawberry-ice in token of their willingness to be as other men, and finally depart

in a cloud of cigarette-smoke and hero-worship.

This record is not concerned with the fact that on their return on board their ship some hours later, one suffered stripes for having forgotten to lock his chest before he went ashore, and the other, being the most junior of all the junior midshipmen, was bidden swiftly to unlace the sub's boots and fetch his slippers.

To every dog his day.

. . . . . .

Random memories such as these necessarily present individuals and incidents, not in the sequence of their importance in the cosmos as one sees it now, but as they appeared to the vision of the Naval Cadet, whose world was an amiable Chaos.

Thus the Captain flickers through this kaleidoscope, an awesome bearded figure, infinitely remote from the small affairs of that teeming rabbit-warren of youth.

More readily comes to mind the picture of his lady wife, white-haired, with clear eyes and gentle voice, a memory somehow entangled with geraniums in red pots about the high-moulded stern-gallery, and tea on Sunday afternoons in the spacious chintz-draped after-cabin; with irksome football sprains and brief puerile illnesses made more endurable by her visits to the cotside.

The Commander, though less awesome than the Captain, approached the mortal in that he stooped at times to wrath. His was the cold eye before which the more hardened malefactors quailed, his the rasping voice that jerked the four terms to attention at Divisions each morning—

"Young gentlemen, 'shun!"

The English public schoolboy is conscious of youth, and takes the fact of being a gentleman for granted. But to hear himself addressed by a designation that combined both qualities was a never-staling subject for inward mirth and a weird self-congratulation difficult of analysis. It conveyed a hint of coming manhood and responsibilities: it was the voice of the Navy, bending on the leading-strings, heard for the first time.

But on a plane far nearer earth stood the Term Lieutenants, each one the god and hero, the Big Brother of his term. That they, their Boxer or South African medal ribbons, their tattoo-marks, County or International caps, biceps, and all the things that were theirs, were the objects of their respective term's slavish adulation, goes without saying. Bloody encounters between their self-appointed champions over an adverse criticism or doubt cast upon a forgotten word were not unknown. Two entire terms once joined battle and bled each others' noses the length and breadth of the echoing "Skipper's Woods" to clinch some far-flung argument as to the merits of their respective "Loots."

There were but four of them, and they were picked from the wardrooms of the whole Navy. Small wonder some three hun-

dred grubby urchins fresh from school found in them admirable qualities.

Ashore, on the playing-fields, or across the red plough-land at the tails of the beagles, they laboured in close intimate fellowship with the atoms of clay Providence thrust beneath their thumbs. But on board it seemed they faded from ken, being rarely seen save at classes or when in pairs the term percolated through the wardroom for dessert, plastered as to the hair, patent-leather shod, to sip and cough over a glass of ambrosial port at either elbow of their Lieutenant.

Seeing and unseen, knowing their terms as only men who spend their lives among men can know and understand the embryo, they were the guiding invisible wisdom behind the cadet captains, who outwardly ruled the decks.

The cadet captains were chosen from the three senior terms, set apart from their fellows by the fact that they were "stand-up" collars and a triangular gold badge on the left cuff.

Minor authority in other guises was greeted much the same as it is in all communities of boyhood. The platitudes of notice-boards no fellow with his heart in the right place could be expected to remember over well. The acknowledged sway of instructors and masters was largely a matter of knowing to a nicety how far an adventurous spirit could go (in the realms of science and freehand drawing it was a long way) before the badgered pedagogue turned and bit. Terms paid strict allegiance to their own chief petty officers. But, as has already been shown, this was an affair of the heart and the sentiments. He was theirs, and they were his: thus it had been from the beginning.

There was, however, one voice that rarely repeated an order, one court from which appeal, if possible, was undreamed of—that of the cadet captain. Their rule was without vexatious tyranny, but it was an iron rule. The selection of these cadet captains was done carefully, and mistakes were few. The standard of the whole was no mean one, and for three months the Lieutenant of the First Term had been studying the raw material, working with it, playing with it, talking to it—or rather listening while it talked to him. . . . Thus cadet captains were chosen, and the queer eager loyalty with which the rest paid them allegiance was the first stirring of the quickened Naval Spirit, foreshadowing that strange fellowship to be, brotherhood of discipline and control, of austerity and a half-mocking affectionate tolerance.

To the cadet captains, perhaps, can be attributed the passage, almost untarnished through the years, of the *Britannia* traditions. They were concerned, these youthful Justices of the Peace, with more than the written law. It they enforced right enough, but with a tolerance one might expect of fifteen summers ad-

ministering the foibles and rules of fifty. On the other hand, did a "new" unbutton a single button of his monkey-jacket, a "Three" deign to swing his keys, a "Sixer" to turn up his trousers or tilt his cap on the back of his head (the prerogative of the "Niner" or Fourth Term), and Nemesis descended upon him ere he slept that night. Nemesis, by virtue of its unblemished character, and the favour its triangular badge found in the eyes of the gods, was allowed to turn in half an hour after the remainder. It occupied itself during this time in guzzling cocoa and biscuits smeared with strawberry jam, provided for its delectation by the authorities — though the cost was said to be defrayed by the parents of the common herd relegated to hammocks, and the contemplation of this orgy out of one drowsy though envious eye.

Biscuits finished, Nemesis would draw from his pocket a knotted "togie" of hemp, and having removed traces of jam from his features, proceed to administer summary justice in the gloom where the hammocks swung.

It was, of course, grossly illegal, and stigmatised by the authorities as "a pernicious system of private and unauthorised punishments." But the alternative was open to any who cared to appeal to Cæsar. Appealing to Cæsar meant spending subsequent golden afternoons on the parade-ground, swinging a heavy barbell to the tune of "Sweet Dreamland Faces," blared out on a cornet by a bored bandsman.

So summary justice ruled, and it ruled in this wise:—

"Shove your knuckles outside that blanket—you needn't pretend to be asleep——"

Chorus of snores, deafening in their realism and self-conscious rectitude, from the wrongdoer's neighbours.

"You were slack attending belly-muster[1] for the third time running——"

"I swear——"

"You'd better not. You'll get six more for swearing——"

"Ow!"

"*Don't* make such a rux . . ."

"Ow!"

"If you yell you'll get double."

"Ow!"

"That's for being slack. Now the other hand. . . . That's for 'nerving'" (modernised = swanking) "with your thumbs in your beckets——"

"Ow!"

"*Shut* up! Stick your knuckles out properly."

"I swear I didn't—ow! . . . Good-night."

. . . . . .

Memories, ah, memories! Haphazard, but happy as only the far-off things can seem, half revealed through the mists of years. Grim old cradle of the Eternal Navy, there lies on

---

[1] "Belly-muster," as its name gracefully implies, was a parade of lightly-clad suspects in procession past the sick-bay while the lynx-eyed surgeon scanned each brisket for traces of incipient chicken-pox rash.

my desk a blotting-pad hewed from your salt timbers; it may be some whimsical ghost strayed out of it to provoke these random recollections. Does it, I wonder, ever unite with other ghosts from chiselled garden-seat or carved candlestick, and there, on the moonlit waters of the Dart, refashion, rib by rib, keel and strake and stempost, a Shadow Ship?

And what of the Longshoremen Billies that plied for hire between the shore and the after-gangway—Johnnie Farr (whom the Good Lawd durstn't love), Hannaford of the wooden leg, and all the rest of that shell-backed fraternity? Gone to the haven of all good ships and sailormen: and only the night wind abroad beneath the stars whispers to the quiet hills the tales of sharks and pirates and the Chiny seas that once were yours and ours.

But what familiar faces throng once more the old decks, and cluster round the empty ports! Is it only to fond memory that you seemed the cheeriest and noblest, or did some beam of the glory to be yours stray out of the Hereafter and paint your boyish faces thus, O best-remembered from those far-off days?

You crowd too quickly now, you whose fair names are legion, so that the splendour of your sacrifices blur and intermingle. The North Sea knows you, and the hidden Belgian mine-fields; the Aurora Borealis was the candle that lit some to bed, and the surf on the beaches of Gallipoli murmurs to others a never-ending lullaby. Ostend and Zeebrugge will not forget you, and the countless tales of your passing shall be the sword-hilt on which our children's children shall cut their teeth.

From out of that Shadow Ship lying at her moorings off the old Mill Creek come the faint echoes of your boyish voices floating out across the placid tide. Could we but listen hard enough, we might catch some message of guidance and encouragement from you who have had your Day:—

"*We are the dead. . . .*

. . . . . .

To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high:
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep. . . ."

There shall be no faith broken. God rest you merry, Gentlemen.

AN INVOLUNTARY VISIT:

THREE DAYS WITH THE TURKS IN MESOPOTAMIA.

BY P. C. S. H.

I.

THE Ballast in the back seat was nozzling over the edge of his cockpit. The folds of the rocky country below looked like crumpled brown paper that had been ineffectually smoothed out, very different from the flat blankness of the plain to which he was accustomed, where the trench lines showed up as clear as print on a page, and there was nothing except the river and an occasional canal-cut.

He was interested in trying to spot trenches and sangars in these wrinkles, in watching the stone weirs which combed the looping river at frequent intervals, and in the movements of the small groups running about below. The crackling alongside of him must have been going on for some time before he noticed it. He looked round carefully for the broken stay or loose end which was making the noise. Everything seemed all right. Then he suddenly realised the noise must be the striking of bullets. In this machine he was not sitting as usual so close over the engine that nothing was audible. Here he was well away from the roar. He looked at the back of the Pilot's head. This had no effect. People who use aeroplanes lose their belief in telepathy.

The Pilot was reflecting what a poisonous country it would be for a forced landing, when the movement of the water-gauge caught his eye. It ran rapidly up to the top, boiling. He swung the machine at once, banking sharply round to the left. The pointer of the water-gauge fell back to zero. Empty radiator. Must have been hit. The machine had its nose towards home now, but the question was how long would the engine last. He looked round at the Ballast, still nozzling eagerly, but could not catch his eye. All that fatuous ass seemed to be concerned with was whether to open with the machine-gun on the scattered targets below; he was apparently irritated by the increased volume of fire from the ground, and engrossed with the idea of hitting back.

The engine stopped. Pilot glanced round. Ballast looked up. This time their eyes met. Telepathy was unnecessary. In the sudden silence the air all round seemed to be crackling with musketry. The

machine was sweeping down on to a most uninviting stretch of rocky wrinkles.

The Ballast stood up for a good look over, saw evasion impossible, and landing apparently hopeless. He wondered if it were worth while opening fire. He felt curiously impersonal; merely hoped hard that he wouldn't be only badly smashed up and left alive.

The Pilot was busy with all his faculties. Just in time he saw in the broad *nala* bottom a little smooth stretch at the foot of a cliff, wheeled sharp, and made a perfect landing with the nose of the machine not twenty yards from the rock face.

"Shall I let 'em have it?" shouted Ballast, fingering the gun and eyeing the rocks. "Give me your matches," snapped Pilot. The matches were in an inner pocket, and took some finding. The *nala* was two or three hundred yards wide, and both rocky edges were lined with excited Turks wildly discharging their rifles. Others in extended order were hurrying up the *nala* bunching temptingly.

Bullets were hitting the machine. The cockpit seat splintered suddenly; Ballast yapped out a damn as his leg was grazed; Pilot was busy wrenching at the petrol-pipe, muttering imprecations. In the hearts of both men was blackness unspeakable. The advancing groups were hesitating now, approaching uncertainly, less than a hundred yards away. Not without reason indeed: the fire of their fellows on the banks was heavy, promiscuous, and wild to a degree, coming from all points of the compass. It was hardly worth while walking into that criss-cross barrage. Ballast was standing up with his hand on the machine-gun. He could make certain of a dozen of them anyway. Pilot got the feed-pipe broken at last, and called out, "Right; she's alight." Ballast looked round and held up his hands. Both men began slowly to climb out of their seats. In a few seconds the volume of musketry slackened and died away as the embarrassed figures in the *nala* ran up.

II.

The first officer to arrive seized our hands, and, pump-handling vigorously, burst out with the astounding remark, "Don't be frightened; put yourselves at ease; you are quite safe now." He was followed by a string of other Turks triumphant, all congratulating either themselves on being in command of the particular party that had actually brought down the plane, or congratulating us on being alive. Our state of mind, needless to say, was not exactly congratulatory nor triumphant.

We found we had landed within a quarter of a mile of

the front line, and right in the thick of a battalion reserve. The battalion headquarters were only three or four hundred yards away, and to these we were led—a small square shelter of waterproof sheets. Some handshaking and interrogation followed, whilst half a dozen eager officers of various grades, squatting outside, all joined in exposing the depth of their sympathy and the badness of their French.

It was hot in the little tent, and overcoats became burdensome. Their removal caused considerable excitement, as the Pilot's exalted rank was thereby made evident; whilst the Ballast had the misfortune to carry on his lapels the most unpopular blazon in the British Army. Coffee was produced, and excellent coffee it was; the Battalion Commander dashed constantly from telephone to table, where, with the assistance of the Battalion Doctor's knowledge of French, he was writing an elaborate report of the capture; every one chattered and laughed; the sun shone; and Pilot and Ballast sat opposite one another and glowered gloomily at the ground.

Soon a party arrived with all the movable gear from the aeroplane, which was spread out for inspection. Fortunately neither of us had any maps or papers of importance. The Turks, both at this time and subsequently, were most scrupulous about all one's private effects except arms and papers. One was permitted to keep all other personal property—including even the emergency ration-bag, which contained a tin of bully and two biscuits. All money was returned at once. A search party was even sent to look for one of Ballast's gloves which he had dropped. Report-writing and exultation was resumed. The part we took in the conversation was not very active; we were hardly in the mood for it. And on their part, such of it as was addressed to us in French consisted mostly of clumsy attempts to elicit information, or else of still more clumsy attempts at consolation. The main refrain of this was: "Well, anyway, the war is over for you; and you will be alive at the end!"

More coffee was produced at intervals, until at length a clatter in the *nala* outside heralded the arrival of a Divisional Staff Officer—a stately young man who could speak no French.

Riding-ponies with Arab saddles were awaiting us, surrounded by an escort of flattering magnitude.

We travelled about forty minutes in this way, passing a good many parties of men resting in caves or in little shelters of stones. All were well turned-out in German infantry kit, complete down to the crowned buttons and the red piping. The only article of Turkish kit that was in evidence was the Enveri topi. The Division seemed well provided with travelling kitchens, where soup

was being made as we passed. But we found later that rations were very short. Men were issued with one loaf of black bread every two days, soup once daily, and sometimes fish or dates or a little meat. It was astonishing how fit they seemed to be, and how cheerful. The officers had ample coffee and a certain amount of sugar and tea; but even they were not nearly so well off either in quality or quantity as a man on our own full-scale standard ration.

As far as equipment went, they were better provided than any Turkish troops previously encountered by us in Mesopotamia.

As we went along, Turkish officers were constantly coming to converse with our escort and shake hands with us. One of these, a dapper little man in a great state of excitement, danced up all aglow, and wrung us repeatedly by the hand as he cried in French: "I brought you down! I brought you down! It was me. I am the machine-gun officer. See that hill? On that alone I have eighteen mitrailleuses; all were directed on you — all. I arranged the barrage. I brought you down. Tell me where my guns hit you. You are not wounded? No — good! The radiator—ah, perfectly! But nowhere else? You do not know! Doubtless your machine was hit many times. It must be riddled without doubt. You are very lucky to have escaped unhurt. It was a very good barrage. I arranged it. You had no chance — no chance at all. But you are yourselves unhurt. I am very glad of that. No, I am a Turk. Yes, there is a German, but he is only a corporal. We do not require German assistance. No! I arrange it all myself,— I arrange everything!" When he had got over his exultation a little he proved interesting enough. The Division had lately come from Europe, was well found, and had a much bigger proportion of machine-guns than we had been accustomed to expect. Rations scanty, but ammunition plentiful.

We knew of a recent change in command of this Division, and ascertained that the late Divisional Commander had left about ten days previously. "Recalled for another appointment," as our polite little informant put it; actually, as we happened to know, Stellenbosched for a withdrawal.

All this time we were moving through rocky hills and along stony *nalas* till, rounding a shoulder, we found another assemblage gathering in groups in the proximity of a very English-looking bell-tent.

At the door of the bell-tent we were received by a charming spare old gentleman with the most expansive smile imaginable. Every tooth appeared to be gold crowned. In excellent French, and in the suavest manner, he poured forth his sympathy and his philosophic condolence. "Gentlemen, you are sad. There is

no reason. You have battled gallantly. You have done your duty; more than duty. It is the chance of war. Why this sadness, then? You will now remain in safety and some degree of comfort till the end of the war. That end cannot now be far off. Why be sad? In a little time the war will be over and you will be restored safely to your families, in full knowledge that you have done all that was possible."

Coffee was produced. The golden-mouthed Brigadier continued his philosophy on the theme of captivity. He descanted at large on the attitude of mind of British officer prisoners in a way that indicated infinite experience. We happened to know, however, that he could not by any possibility have met more than four at most. He discussed the use and abuse of aeroplanes, and was very explicit in his dislike of our bombing and machine-gunning enterprises.

He found the situation in Europe interesting. The Germans were advancing. They were already bombarding Paris. Very soon the war would be over. And then — then we should meet again happily in Paris? or London? yes.

We exchanged addresses, drank more coffee, and proceeded on our journey. The path now descended from the bare broken country into the narrow strip of grassy plain which borders the river. This prevented us seeing the surrounding country at all. The utmost one could do was to mark the shapes of hills, the mouths of particularly big *nalas*, and the positions of any landmarks that were passed.

We were able to talk together, and agreed that we must play for delay in every way possible. We both had a general idea of the intentions of the British force, and knew that the nearer we could keep to the front, the more our movement back could be postponed, the better.

After about five miles going, we turned off from the river, and soon afterwards saw a group of tents in a *nala*. This proved to be the camp of the Divisional Commander, a tall thin man of forty-five, with an intelligent face and thick gold-rimmed glasses. He received us politely outside his bell-tent, and ushered us in. We sat down, and coffee was produced at once. The Divisional Commander did not feel much at home in French, and told us that he would summon one of his men who could speak English excellently. A good-looking boy of eighteen appeared shortly after at the tent door, saluted smartly, and opened on us in faultless American. Most of the conversation after this was carried on through his interpretation; though occasionally the General, when very interested, would burst into execrable French, search wildly for the required word, stammer unintelligibly, come to a halt, and then have recourse to the interpreter once more.

After a polite expression of

satisfaction that we had not been wounded, he told us that we must make ourselves at home. To facilitate which process he informed us that the tent and all its furniture were English. They had come from Gallipoli, spoils of war. He was very certain that we should not be prisoners long. The war was in its last stage: Paris bombarded, and the Germans advancing at the rate of five kilometres a day. His news seemed accurate as far as we knew the situation, and to be rather later than anything we had heard. He read out to us a wireless message just received, announcing a further German advance, and claiming the capture of a number of villages. From what we saw all along their wireless appeared to be very good, and the arrangements for the dissemination of news prompt and efficient. Bulletins were received throughout the day. They may have been due to the fact that at the time the news was favourable, the German advance in France being then in full swing. In any case, the best use was made of it; the troops were informed promptly, and confidence in the final victory of the Germans was most noticeable in all ranks.

We had a long conversation with the Divisional Commander on the subject. He was astonished at our inability to grasp the inevitableness of the German victory. After a long period of eloquence which made no impression, he asked us in desperation, "Well, when do *you* think the war will be over?" Ballast answered impassively, "When we have won." This reduced the General to dumbfoundered silence. But he returned repeatedly to the point during the next hour, incredulous that any one could be so blockheaded. On one of these occasions the Pilot in his suavest manner put in, "It is difficult for you to realise, General, that we—the English-speaking portion of the Allies, I mean—have hardly begun to fight yet. We weren't military nations, you see, and up till now we've really only been making our armies: just training them, you know. Next year, however, we hope to be able really to start ahead." This nearly finished off our host.

Conversation turned on to our own campaign. Old battles were discussed, and the deplorable prospect of the summer of inaction was touched upon; especially the extreme discomfort of the present position on this front, and the appalling heat that was to be anticipated in these rocky trenches. It would be a very boring business for both sides sitting opposite one another in these trenches all through the hot weather.

Relations being established now on a cordial basis, Pilot asked whether a message could be sent across to the British, so that our relatives could be informed that we were uninjured; and that our kit might be dropped over. The General assured us that this would be done: that he had already

wired to his Army Headquarters for instructions, but hoped that we should be staying with him for a few days, as officer prisoners had done previously, until the arrival of our kit. (We ascertained later, however, that the only information the British H.Q. received on the subject from the Turks officially, was the Constantinople Wireless Press of the next day which mentioned our capture.) We touched tentatively on the subject of Germans, and met with very little enthusiasm. The General evidently disliked the subject. He stated briefly that he had a number attached to his Command in various technical and advisory capacities, but that none of them were in a position of any executive authority.

It was very noticeable that there was no love lost between the Germans and the Turks or the Arabs, or any others that we met. They were heartily disliked everywhere.

Before we took our leave the General remonstrated in a very decided manner on the abuse of aeroplane superiority. He had none now at his direct disposal, whilst we had plenty; and not only indulged in frequent bombing raids and reconnaissances (which he regarded as mere waste of petrol on our part: surely one flight a day would be ample), but had taken to the reprehensible habit of sweeping down low, and machine-gunning roads and paths in his rear, thus rendering still more acute his already troublesome transport difficulties.

Pilot of course pointed out in the blandest manner that in this terrain observation was very difficult, and preparations for concentration for offensive action might easily be missed unless constantly watched; moreover we had known of his arrival, and it was necessary for us to watch very carefully a man of his reputation. However, the General was not to be diverted from his reproaches anent our unsportsmanlike habit of machine-gunning harmless ration-parties well away from his anti-aircraft defences.

Before we took our leave we asked for a meal, which was promised; and for the return of such private correspondence as had been in our pockets, which was refused.

It was nearly sunset when we were dismissed. Ali, the young interpreter, was sent along with us to see that our needs were attended to. We passed *en route* a big green double fly-tent in which three German officers were sitting, and a little farther on came to a bell-tent from which bedding was being removed. Tentage being very short, Turkish officers were clearing out to make room for us.

Throughout our sojourn in their hands we invariably met with the greatest courtesy and consideration from all Turkish officers. The hunger and cold we experienced were due to force of circumstances or actual lack of supplies, not to any ill-will on their part; and

the fact that the lot of a wounded prisoner of war would be extremely unenviable, is not due to any deliberate brutality or frightfulness, but to the total absence of any adequate medical material, or personnel, or arrangements.

Ali showed himself most friendly. He was a man of good family, had been educated at an American college at Constantinople, and knew many of the English Colony there before the War. He related to us various stories about General Townshend, whom he had seen, and for whom the Turks appear to have a great respect and affection. He also gave us good accounts of four R.F.C. officers who had previously been brought down on this front. All had been kept at Divisional Headquarters for several days. One pair of these, a Pilot and Observer, one of them a particularly hefty Colonial, appeared to have had heart-breaking luck. They were forced down a long way behind the Turkish front, made a landing in the desert, burnt their machine all right, and got away. They struggled gallantly on for forty-eight hours, and had got so near home before they were caught by Turkish cavalry, that they were actually in sight of our Lamb cars, who unfortunately did not notice them.

Ali's dislike of the Germans was extremely emphatic. Later on, when one of these gentlemen was coming to interrogate us, Ali bounced into the tent with the warning, "Here comes the sausage, but don't you take any notice of him: he can't touch you." At the time we were somewhat bewildered by this announcement, as, not having had anything since an early breakfast, we were rather expecting something to eat.

We got permission to walk up and down outside the tent under a guard of four sentries, and on one pretext or another managed to get a fair idea of our immediate surroundings by nightfall, when we were confined to our tent, and Ali went off to get us a meal. This gave us an opportunity of discussing ways and means. It was a most unfortunate thing for us that the moon was almost full: a full moon in Mesopotamia is to the English moon as an arc-lamp to a glow-worm. Moreover, at dusk the wind drops entirely, and the night is so still that the slightest noise is audible.

Our tent was pitched on a ledge in a small *nala*. The guard lived five yards farther up the *nala*, with one sentry at our door, and another on the hillside above the tent.

The hillside was covered with loose stones. The only possible way of leaving the tent would be by the back, where the earth was cut away to fit it. One would have to go without boots, and even then there was little chance of avoiding making a noise on the stones. The full moon was bright as day on the lemon-coloured rock.

There were three dogs about, apparently belonging to the

guard, jolly beasts of an Arab sheep-dog strain. We spent half an hour playing with them and making friends, hoping to avoid their suspicions later on.

We thought that if we could only avoid the sentries and get a clear hour's start, we would have a fair chance. Without this start, any attempt at escape would be hopeless.

It seemed advisable to refuse beds and to sleep on the ground, both for warmth and also to be more inconspicuous, and ready to take advantage of any possible clouding over of the moon, storm, or other accidental occurrence.

We both had a fairly shrewd suspicion as to what the British force was contemplating, and a very hearty confidence in the two Generals concerned. We knew that if any one could bring the coup off, it would be the leader of the Dolphins. But we did not know for what date the stroke was planned, nor any details, of course. However, we were much relieved by the evident intention of the Turkish Divisional Commander to keep us where we were for a day or two.

About seven o'clock they brought us a meal of black bread, thick soup, and a fowl. Fully occupied, we were surprised by a "Good evening, gentlemen, don't let me interrupt you," in perfect English. This was the German Intelligence Officer. After a short preliminary spar over our refusal to give anything but name and rank, he gave in with good enough grace, and entertained us for an hour or more with his reminiscences of Calcutta, where he had been living for sixteen years before the War, engaged in the rice trade. As his absence in the East had prevented him from putting in the necessary training during this period, he lost his rank of Reserve Officer, and had to go in as a Private when the raising of the age-limit in Germany caught him in the second year of the War. He had risen to "Under Officer" quickly enough, and had volunteered for Asia, thinking his experience would help him. The Senior Intelligence Officer with the Force having lately gone sick, he had been appointed to his job, and was expecting his commission to arrive very shortly. It was already on its way from Berlin. He was being well paid, especially as all Germans on this front were paid in gold, which they promptly exchanged for Turkish notes at a fraction of the latter's face value. These notes they remitted to Europe, where State bonds could be bought and paid for with the notes at their full face value.

Asked what had happened to his property in Calcutta, he laughed cheerfully. "Oh, I am out of that all right. I sold up everything in June 1914, including my house, and got my family and all away. Some of my stuff was on the last two boats which arrived at Hamburg." No comment seemed necessary.

He said that the higher authorities were anxious to get us to Aleppo as soon as possible, and that we would

start as soon as a conveyance could be arranged. This most unwelcome news made us both long heartily for a heavy storm that night: a murrain on all Turk transport: or a plague of profound slumber on all our guards.

Broussa was likely to be our eventual destination: a delightful climate, excellent water-supply, high above the Sea of Marmora, charming views, only four hours' run from Stamboul—all the comforts of a first-class penitentiary in fact.

We were pretty sleepy, but we hadn't been rolled in our greatcoats on the floor of the tent for more than an hour when we were waked by a curt summons to get up and be going. In vain we opposed this: cajoled, delayed, even insisted on an A.D.C. going back to the General with a request that as we were very tired we might be permitted a night's rest. The answer came that the order was inexorable, had come from higher authority, and must be obeyed.

A small springless waggon, closed in all round with canvas flaps, awaited us in the bright moonlight, surrounded by about a dozen mounted men. We found next morning that these were Tartars. They were looked upon by the Turkish authorities as very trustworthy and quite unbribable, probably quite correctly—in any case, they couldn't understand our best-intentioned attempts at bribing in any known language. Strong, cheery, hearty fellows, but absolute barbarians. Two sat on the box of the waggon and appeared to use the whip unceasingly. Through the chinks of the canvas we could see a man riding at each wheel, whilst three or four more spurred their steeds along so close behind that whenever the vehicle checked, the horses ran their noses into the back-board. The remainder of the escort kept ten or twelve lengths in rear. It was a most uncomfortable night: cold, and the road very rough. The cart had constantly to be helped over bad bits by one or two of the guard, and sometimes we had all to get out whilst the empty waggon was dragged over some obstacle. Towards morning we halted half an hour for water.

Soon after dawn the miserable pair of ponies gave out altogether. We were not sorry to get down and walk to get some warmth into our legs. Four of the guard accompanied us, the remainder staying with the waggon. The whip had no effect on the exhausted animals harnessed to the vehicle. With the indifference born of habit, three or four of the guard would proceed to dismount and belabour them savagely with their rifles till they staggered on once more. As the sun rose we came to strips of cultivation and scattered palm-trees, and saw for the first time the famous water-wheels by which all the irrigation of the upper reaches of the river is done.

An arched aqueduct of grey stone runs out into the water and carries at its far end one or more Heath-Robinson-

looking wheels, eighteen to twenty-four feet in diameter, made of branches and logs all in the rough. Along the circumference of this is bound a series of earthen pots, and on the spokes are fastened paddles. Against these the force of the current is directed by stone weirs, which slope diagonally out into the stream. As the wheel turns slowly, groaning and travailing, the pots dip under the water at the bottom of the circle, fill, and travel on up till, at the top, they empty their burden with a pleasant splashing into the stone runnel. Why the whole contraption doesn't fall to bits forthwith is one of those mysteries of Oriental mechanism, like the Ekka and the Dhobi's donkey, to which sojourn in the East gradually hardens one.

The water-wheels became more frequent; the palms thickened to a grove; houses began to occur at intervals. We passed a couple of big caves, wherein ammunition-boxes were dimly visible, guarded by sprawling Tartars, and crossed a field to the village on the river's edge.

At the entrance to the *khan*—a closed square of sheds with a two-storied building at each end—we were received by the Commandant, and conducted to his office above the gateway. Here coffee was provided, and the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood quickly gathered to meet us. All the officers were lieutenants. There was he Commandant himself, a weak-looking, middle-aged Arab, who perhaps shaved every Wednesday: Tuesday, to-day. The Post-Commandant, a meagre, saturnine sort of youth, buttoned up to the chin in a magnificent grey German officer's overcoat reaching to his ankles, which made him look more than ever like a Jesuit in a cassock. The Supply Officer—round and comfortable, as was befitting. And the Mayor—in dress and appearance a seedy north-country farmer. None knew English or more than a few words of French, and as we had taken up a firm position on the only bench, happily they melted away before long. This gave us a chance of examining our quarters. Ballast very soon found in an old box full of papers an excellent German map, and got busy measuring scales and bearings which might be useful to us.

Accompanied by the sentry normally stationed at the door of our room, we were permitted to take exercise up and down on the flat roof of the single-storied shed which ran round three sides of the courtyard. We thus obtained a fair idea of the lie of the land and the dispositions of the enemy. The office had two small unglazed windows looking across thirty yards of foreshore to the river. Pulled up on the foreshore for several hundred yards were rows and rows of those heavy square-ended, flat-bottomed boats which the Turks build higher up and send down river loaded with stores. Opposite us, across a couple of hundred yards of the clean, swiftly-running river, was a palm-

covered island, on which the main village seemed to be built. One of the big boats was being used regularly as a ferry to the island, worked with difficulty by four men. The drop from the office windows to the ground was about 12 feet, but the room was thoughtlessly situated directly over the main entrance arch, where a sentry was posted. By manipulating the table and bench, it might be possible, though not easy, to get out of the window and up on to the roof. This roof was the highest part of the whole building, and extended over the five rooms which formed the upper storey of the *khan* along its front face. There was also an upper storey, where the garrison lived, along its rear face. One long side of the courtyard was formed by a wall 12 feet high; the other side by the line of flat-roofed sheds, on which we were permitted to take exercise. The drop from this roof to the lane alongside was only about 12 feet, and the lane was only 50 yards long, but there was a sentry stationed at the end where it gave on to the fields. Beyond him, a couple of hundred yards across the open, and one would be at the foot of the hill, rather uncomfortably close to the sentry at the ammunition cave, but with only three or four hundred yards' climb up the open slope to the crest. Not till one was over the crest would one be out of sight of the village in this time of full moon.

When we returned from our promenade, we found ourselves transferred from the office to the room next door. The windows of this were somewhat less practicable; on the other hand, it was four yards farther from the sentry in the archway. We were just off to sleep when we received a visit from the local medical officer, an Armenian, who spoke fairly good English, learned in the Medical College at Beirut. He seemed to think we should stay where we were for a couple of days whilst a better conveyance was being provided. He offered to send us up some bedding pending the arrival of our own kit, and interested himself in arranging for the provision of an evening meal for us.

He invited us to visit his hospital on the island in the afternoon, saying he would make the necessary arrangements with the Commandant. Accordingly about 2.30 P.M. we were ferried across with one officer and four Tartars as escort. The current was swift, and it was only after much invocation of Allah that the rough clumsy boat just managed to make the landing without being swept downstream. We were met on the bank by the doctor and the pharmacist, another Armenian, and shown with great pride over the hospital. This consisted of four or five miserable Arab houses, with tiny rooms and mud walls, stuffy, fly-blown, and hot. The patients lay crowded on the floors of the rooms,—at times, it was said, to the number of a hundred or even more. It was a most depressing sight, yet we

were assured it was by far the best hospital within a hundred miles of the firing line; and until the present doctor's arrival, three months' previously, there had been nothing at all. Indeed it was only within the last few weeks, by dint of repeated applications, that he had been able to get any drugs or dressings. He was immensely proud of his pharmacy, though to us it seemed a very poor affair: three small shelves of drugs and a box of dressings. This was the only Clearing Hospital for a whole Infantry Division, and the next nearest hospital was a hundred miles back from the front, over a very rough road, with practically no means of conveyance available for a serious case.

Tea, with sugar—both rather precious commodities — was served to us, our escort, and various other personages who had drifted into the doctor's bedroom. Here he showed us his photographs and certificates, his few books—he had an English 'Materia Medica' amongst his most treasured possessions — and his water-colour sketches. Yes, he was an artist. But appreciation of Armenian art is evidently not acquired spontaneously by Europeans. Our Turkish confrères became gradually so bored by the English conversation that they eventually left us alone, with only the four Tartars to guard us. The island was a very pretty little place, a happy combination of clear green water, grey rock, mud walls, and palm-trees. There seemed to be a great many remains of ancient stone buildings. The island lies about mid-stream, 250 yards from the right bank, whence we had come, and rather farther from the left.

One incident in our wanderings round the island gave us some momentary anxiety. We were passing under a two-storied house, Pilot with the doctor somewhat ahead, deep in conversation, when Ballast, who was behind, looked up and saw three or four Germans in an upper window. Pilot's conversation could not be stopped quite at once, and if any of the Huns happened to understand English we were afraid we might get into trouble.

Before we left the island we had an opportunity of seeing the village carpenter at work on the construction of a new water-wheel, and the miracle of its holding together at all became more wonderful than ever. Eventually about four o'clock we returned to the right bank, the richer for a good deal of useful information, and a very precious glass bottle of one imperial quart capacity.

During the day the Pilot had once or twice heard what he thought was the sound of guns to the south-east, and after consultation we decided that if the moon should be hidden at all, or if any chance should occur of evading or downing the sentry stationed under our window, we would make a dash for the desert that night. The river was beyond our powers of swim-

ming without assistance, and would mean leaving our boots, thus rendering us practically immobile if we did reach the far bank. We had a quart of water, and in the emergency bag we had brought from the aeroplane enough rations for forty-eight hours at a pinch. We had been promised a meal that evening, and were beginning indeed to feel that we needed it. We knew the directions and distances approximately from the German map, and we felt confident that once given a fair start, in that limestone wilderness full of holes and caverns, we had a very good chance of avoiding our pursuers. The whole difficulty lay in getting the fair start, and the most insuperable part of this, under the existing conditions of full moon and great quiet, was the evasion of the sentries in the first few hundred yards. For this we must depend on opportunity.

So much settled, Pilot promptly fell asleep. Ballast went out to stalk up and down the roof, and that is how he happened to witness the arrival of the messenger. The sun was within half an hour of setting when there was a clatter of hoofs on the road, and an Arab came galloping, loose rein, down the lane. The pale ascetic, always buttoned to chin in his strait overcoat, happened to be slowly pacing the foreshore. The Arab threw himself off his mount, dashed up to the officer and commenced an excited harangue. At once the whole demeanour of the latter changed. A few more words and both were running towards the *khan*, jabbering hard. Ballast turned on his heel, entered the room, shook the Pilot, and said: "Wake up, old bird, things have started happening; Bob the Thruster is getting a move on." The *khan* was already resounding with shouting, running, and bustle. Very soon the wild-eyed Commandant burst into the room with peremptory orders that the prisoners were to start off at once. The greatest astonishment was feigned: every form of pretext to delay matters was tried. We were both bundled out unceremoniously into the same old vehicle as before. Whack! whack! went the whip, and off we started at full gallop, with our mounted escort tearing along behind. A regular *sauve qui peut* from the village was in progress. As far as could be seen westwards the whole strip of the plain between the hills and the river was dotted with flying figures. Men on ponies, men on donkeys, men running—all with faces towards the sunset, and apprehensive glances over their shoulders. No one seemed to have waited to collect any kit. Perhaps they had none. Anyway, they were rushing along with nothing but rifles and bandoliers, a hunk of bread and a water-bottle, with perhaps a hastily snatched up coat or blanket.

The waggon jumped and bounded, the drivers lashed the horses, the Tartars beat

their mounts, throwing jerky broken sentences at one another. This frenzied compliment to the British Army continued till dusk, when the pace moderated and eventually slowed down to a walk, all that the poor tired-out beasts were capable of. We were exultant. It is pleasant to see a horse you've backed win. Far pleasanter when it's a man; and in this case we both had known and had steadily backed the winner for a long time.

Our joy, however, was somewhat tempered by personal considerations. We could not help wishing he had put it off for one night! Every yard back we went was making our escape more difficult. Various possibilities were discussed, the probabilities of what had been happening were conjectured, and a line of action for the morrow decided on. Eventually we composed ourselves to the effort of dosing between the jolts of the very long and chilly night's journey; to obtain any rest in that vehicle was a matter of considerable and continuous effort.

Dawn found the ponies dead-beat. No brutality on the part of the Tartars could rouse them. Ourselves, we were glad enough to walk again. The road had been considerably improved by the Turks or Germans; it had been well graded and was now fit for motor transport, except for one big *nala*, the bridge over which was incomplete.

It was a jolly morning, full of larks and breeze and sunshine. In the distance were the palm-groves of our destination, the highest point up the river that the palm flourishes. All the country we passed through was deserted and barren, but the whole river-plain bore traces of former continous cultivation. Everywhere ruined aqueducts, wheel-pillars, and weirs, and the enduring traces of ancient ploughs. Desolation, the trail of the Turk.

About 9 o'clock, as we neared the outskirts of the town, four of our planes came over quite low. The Tartars were greatly perturbed. "Tyara, Tyara," they babbled, snatched off our hats and hustled us hither and thither in search of a place of concealment, the remainder scurrying behind the nearest rocks and walls and opening fire. By this time every rifle in the town appeared to be engaged, frantically yapping. We were wishing the planes would go on, nervous lest a lucky shot might bring down one of them. But with their customary magnificent indifference the planes took no notice; they circled slowly round over the town, emptied a few Lewis gun magazines, one of them in our direction, and then buzzed carelessly off. It wasn't a very easy incident for the Pilot.

At 9.30 A.M. we reached the Military Headquarters on the river bank in the middle of the town. We were received by a number of junior officers, and on inquiring for the Commandant, were told he was unfortunately away on duty. Of the nature of this duty we had a shrewd suspicion. But the fact was

disappointing, as we particularly wished to see the man for various reasons, one of which was to protest against having no officer to mitigate our Tartar escort. However, warned by previous experience, we were determined to waste no opportunity this time. At once we demanded to see the Doctor, saying we were ill, much too ill to travel any farther. We were assured that we should spend at least two days here, whilst suitable conveyance was being arranged. We then demanded food, of which we really were in need; as, with the exception of the meal on the first night, we had practically eaten nothing for over forty-eight hours. It is a curious fact that neither of us had felt hunger. Possibly the figurative phrase "Fed up" has an actual physical significance.

As usual, every one seemed most anxious to tell us the news from France and the further progress made by the Germans. We asked them what news there was of British progress in Mesopotamia, but the matter appeared to lack interest for them.

The language difficulty was somewhat acute here. No one could talk English, and only two of them knew a little French. The Pilot had a smattering of Arabic, so the negotiations were left to him. His procedure was simple in the extreme: he tried each officer in French or Arabic straightway with "Are you a Turk?" The sheep were thus divided from the goats at one sweep. Remained to seize an opportunity with each non-Turk separately. "Are you an Arab?" "Where do you come from?" The fold was eventually narrowed down to two: a plump, timorous little denizen of Basra and a grave grey-whiskered mariner from Baghdad. Followed from us much praise of these two picturesque habitats of base-barnacles. Eventually as either was isolated, he was asked whether he did not want to see his home again. Hot upon his heartfelt admission came the demand, how much hard gold he wanted to enable him to get home, taking us along with him. By this delightfully direct method we had within an hour of our arrival two active sympathisers cudgelling their brains on our behalf.

Meanwhile, Ballast had been making a personal reconnaissance of the precincts, and came back full of information. There appeared to be only two Tartar sentries. From the latrine on the roof it was an easy drop into a shadowy palm-grove; and, less than a hundred yards across this, the hills rose steeply at once. It would be a long trek back, as a big detour would be necessary—sixty miles probably. But the German map had marked a big *nala* running up into the interior, and at the point where we had crossed that this morning there had been water in it. With any luck we might hope to find water farther up also.

An excellent breakfast was produced: boiled eggs—Ballast in his hurry found out too late they were not hard-boiled—

two black loaves, dollops of sour curds and date-treacle. One black loaf made its way into our emergency bag. Soon afterwards the Doctor arrived. To our disappointment he turned out to be a Turk, not an Armenian. He seemed very little impressed by the sickliness of our appearance, but we explained at length that it was rest and sleep that we really wanted. We also made request for something to clean our teeth with. Most men will agree that though being unshaven is beastly enough, being unable to wash one's teeth is worse. Instead, however, of the mouth-wash we hoped for, a packet of tooth powder was produced. However, one's forefinger is a less inefficient toothbrush than might be imagined.

Much refreshed, we were composing ourselves gratefully to sleep at last on the benches under the Turkish standard which covered the ceiling of the Commandant's office, when a strange officer entered brusquely and announced that he was desolated, but that orders had come for our departure onwards at once. He much regretted that camels were the only means of conveyance available for the next three stages, as all carts had had to be sent off for those wounded in a small skirmish that had occurred with the British yesterday. We asked the reason for all this hurry if the British—as they stoutly maintained—had made no advance. We temporised and entreated. We even appealed to the doctor again, which certainly gained about half an hour, but had no lasting effect. Meanwhile there were signs of considerable bustle in the building, and the crowd of Arabs on the river front before our windows had grown in numbers and interest. Several Germans were moving about, but we saw no officers.

After registering every protest we could devise, we were no longer able to avoid being conducted out to the main road, where we were presented with a fresh escort of twelve Tartars on foot and a Turkish officer on a diminutive pony. To start with, the Tartars were turned out in full marching order, carrying knapsacks, blankets, &c.; but before we had gone four miles everything except rifles and bandoliers was slung on to our camels. The clothing of the men consisted mainly of ragged oddments of European mufti, and the equipment of no two was alike. Most of it seemed to be home-made. Amongst this dozen of our escort we noticed four different patterns of rifle of as many different calibres. Every man carried some two hundred rounds for his own particular pattern. Possibly this was the reason they took every opportunity of discharging their pieces: at a bird, into the river, or apparently just from sheer light-heartedness. After all, every shot lessened their loads. We soon found that as usual the Tartars could speak no language but their own outlandish tongue, of which the Turkish officer was wholly ignorant. Indeed,

he was acquainted with nothing but Turkish, of which neither of us knew one single word. Communication between the component parts of the menagerie was therefore neither rapid nor accurate. For our comfort and delectation two camels with pack-saddles had been provided. One was white and one was brown, and they were the most contrary pair of animals possible. Moreover, these camels have no nose-cords, and are accustomed to be driven in droves, not led. They objected loudly and viciously to being made to sit down, and the moment their heads were released would jump up violently and promptly clear their immediate vicinity. All of which facts proved ultimately very fortunate for us.

The Aleppo road runs straitly at the very foot of the low cliffs which here form the edge of the plateau. The river plain is narrow, and for five miles it is filled from water's edge to cliff wall with date and fruit gardens. Walls and houses, well separated and mostly set along the river's brim, break up the greenery pleasantly. There are islands in the river, and the water is green and clear and rapid. The result is the most picturesque town in Mesopotamia. Bright yellow cliffs, grass crowned; palm plumes and sunshine; almond blossom, and the river racing broad under the sun.

At one point on the edge of the road, in the cliff face, were several caves, the biggest of which was crammed with ammunition.

We had been warned that there were three barren marches ahead, with no villages or cultivation. The last palm-trees stop at the bend above the town, where a big fort on the bluff opposite commands both reaches of the river, up and down. The road does not follow the river, but climbs on to the plateau and cuts ten or twelve miles across a big bend.

Talking it over, we agreed that the British victory must have been pretty complete to have put the wind up to the extent that was evident. It seemed probable that the cavalry had rounded up the whole bunch and then gone on to clear the village where we spent the day yesterday, in which case the armoured cars might possibly be sent on as far as the town we had just left. That was about all they could be expected to manage. It was a vexatious reflection. The pilot was confident, however, that his planes would make great efforts to find out where we were, and possibly even to rescue us. A few days previously one of our two-seaters had been brought down in the desert. A single-seater, seeing the situation, had swooped down, made a landing alongside, picked up both occupants, and got away home all right. But there had been no enemy close by.

In our case matters were more difficult. Even if we were recognised, our escort stuck so close to us always,

that Lewis gun fire would be impracticable; whilst it was very evident from what we had seen, that if any attempt were made to bounce them, they would unhesitatingly lay us out first, whatever they decided to do afterwards. However, an even chance was more than we expected to get; and the R.F.C. would probably devise some wily stratagem, if only they could first ascertain our whereabouts.

Conversation was difficult, as the two camels liked to go different paces, and whenever they saw the least chance would wander off the road to graze, till driven back with blows and imprecations by the escort or the Buddu driver—a decent fellow, named Muhammad, who kept himself austerely aloof from the Tartars. Sitting on the pack-saddles, we had no control whatever over the animals, as there was no nose-string, and our guard refused to allow us even a twig in our hands to direct the beasts.

We had been going about four hours when there was a sudden commotion and shouts of "Tyara"; and, sure enough, there were two of our planes coming along. Much running hither and thither ensued. The Pilot was pulled off his camel and hurried away from the path; his topi was torn off; every one gave orders—except the Turkish officer, who seemed to be the only one that obeyed them. Men dashed about in all directions, quite uselessly, as there was no cover worth mentioning anywhere on that part of the plateau. Ballast's camel was a little distance off the path at the time, with only two Tartars near. He had his feet well tucked up out of reach, unconcerned by the excitement of the Tartars. However, he took off his hat to temporise with them. He was determined to stay on the camel if possible, so as to be more conspicuous for the observers. Overhead came the planes; and then they began circling down over our groups. The Tartars themselves were in two minds what to do. Lower and lower came the planes. Surely they must see us now. Surely! Ballast put up his topi at arm's length and waved it vigorously. The enraged Tartar standing below threw up his rifle—the muzzle within a foot of Ballast's back—and pulled the trigger. The cartridge missed fire.

Ballast, so engrossed in looking up and waving to the plane that he was unconscious of this outrage, treated it accordingly with the courage and indifference that comes of ignorance, and continued his signalling. The infuriated Tartar, impatient of the unreliability of modern inventions, reverted to the methods of his fathers, clubbed his rifle and caught him a swinge across the buttocks that brought him off the camel on to the ground. Both Ballast and the Tartar were now frenzied, and anything might have happened, had not the plane at that moment—crowning irony—opened an extremely accurate and well-directed burst of fire on the pair of them, knocking up the dust all round. By some fluke

neither was hit, but it was rather like a snipe getting through the pattern of No. 5's.

Considerable recrimination in three languages ensued. Everybody was on the run, and we were roughly hustled away on foot from the vicinity of the road. The planes had climbed again and were clearing off. Ballast passionately harangued the Turkish officer on one side, whilst a mob of Tartars assailed him on the other. He understood neither, of course, but hurried along thoroughly frightened of both parties. Excitement gradually subsided. The Pilot, who naturally felt more acutely both the disappointment and the difficulties about the airmen, soothed down the wrothful Ballast. He was confident that the Flying Corps would not give up yet; they would certainly make at least one more attempt. The recognition of the party; the finding of a suitable landing-place in this difficult country; the timing of the exploit; and, most of all, the circumventing of the escort, made the odds against success enormous. It was agreed, however, that in any case, whether an attempt at rescue or at escape, the most important thing for us, and the most difficult, was to get away from the guard: any opportunity for doing this must be carefully watched for and taken advantage of at once. One's thoughts and conversation ran almost exclusively on escape. That one idea is an obsession with a prisoner. Every possibility was canvassed: the procedure most advisable at the first place where we should be allowed to stop for more than a few hours; such scanty information as we had of the Bedouin tribes to southward; the accessibility of the Turkish officials, and the most convincing way of persuading them that money promised would be paid "on delivery of goods"; the best method of surprising and "doing in" silently the armed guard; even the time that would be required to learn Turkish or Arabic sufficient to give one a reasonable chance, should we eventually be incarcerated at Broussa or elsewhere without having had a single previous opportunity of escaping.

Only once did we cease from these fantasies,—and that was at dusk, when we came down off the plateau on to the river-plain, where it was thick with flowers and the smell rose up and caught us by the throat. It was England in one rush: all one's memory of May month in England. And we—out of it: able-bodied but helpless and useless, whilst the War was being fought to a finish. That was the blackest moment of all.

Soon afterwards the Pilot glanced over his shoulder and said, "Look at that." Standing upon the horizon was a single blazing pillar of silver fire—a thing unique—so that for a moment we had no thought of moonrises. Extraordinarily impressive and most wonderfully beautiful. In the whole sky there was no other cloud. After that there was

silence, but the Pilot's confidence never failed him again.

Night fell, and it grew cold on the camels, so we got down and walked the last three hours. After a very long time a light appeared on the horizon, and, like all lights at night, seemed to recede as we approached. However, even night-farers do eventually make progress, and at long-last we drew up at the gate of the ramshackle, mud-walled square of a miserable *khan*. The door was barred and bolted, but our escort parleyed with the keeper, and we soon found ourselves in a filthy courtyard littered with sleeping Tartars and drooping ponies, the only available cover the four filthy little rooms of the gate-house. In one of these a smoky wick was burning in a tin of oil, and two men were poring over account books. We demanded to see the Commandant. One of the pair, a meek-looking bearded man, rose and answered in good English: "Well, sir, I was the Commandant until yesterday. The present Commandant is asleep upstairs." He was an Armenian, of course, and, like all the Armenians we met, a most kindly and obliging fellow, but broken.

We were tired and hungry, and insisted on seeing the Commandant. He turned out to be a well-nourished young man, his hair smooth as his manners, his podgy hands beringed, scented, silky, and resplendent in a frogged, fur-lined coat, which he wore over his night-shirt. He gave orders at once for food to be prepared, and we all sat down to await its arrival. Presently our Turkish officer arrived and joined us in his deliberate, ox-like way. It took over two hours to produce a meal, but the time passed pleasantly enough. Our flabby host was a regular young man about Bitlis, very ready to talk about himself and his achievements. Possibly he was somewhat flattered by this, his first meeting with British officers, and the condescension of his position in regard to them in spite of their superior rank. At any rate, he was graciously pleased to expound to us the immediate strategy of the War in Europe, its future course, and the date and results of its conclusion. He threw an entirely new light on the latter part of the Mesopotamian Campaign as influenced by his own achievements, the finale of which was an account of his escape from the last Thermopylæan stand at Ramadie by swimming the river at the head of his men.

At last the long-looked-for food appeared: black bread and a big bowl of barley-broth, into which we all dipped. Excellent stuff. Date-syrup and more black bread followed. By this time our host was in great fettle, and, to top up with, suddenly dived his hand behind a box in the corner and triumphantly produced a small bottle with the magic words "Eau de Vie." This was his last drop, and we did justice to it, share and share alike all round. Fair do's. The stuff

was a pretty vile sort of arrack, but warming enough, and had a great effect on the Commandant. He was full of protestations of friendship, meetings after the War, exploits of gallantry in a fairer field. Then he waxed confidential and gave us a great deal of professional advice, saying that when we had soldiered as long as he had we would recognise the soundness of it. (Ballast had, as a matter of plain fact, just six times his service.) Then he grew rather quarrelsome, and finally reached the sleepy stage, and was taken off to bed. It was now 2 A.M., and we rejoiced that we were pretty certain of considerable delay and a late start next morning, especially as we had been promised a good meat-meal before leaving. We were thoroughly ready for sleep ourselves, as we had not had a night's rest since we were captured. The earthen floor of the room was very filthy, and there was only one bench. But in a corner was a small, raised, brick dais, and the Armenian officer was most helpful. He not only got this brushed and cleaned, but insisted on lending us each a blanket of his own. The room had no windows and only one door, which was locked and had a double sentry just outside it. No chance of escape here. So we were off to sleep at once, and knew nothing more till nine o'clock in the morning.

The dope of the night before had evidently had its effect on our Mohamedan friends, for no attempt was made to worry us before then. We dallied over our toilets as much as possible; and, what with that and the right royal breakfast that was served, it was half-past ten before we got under way. Our hosts had been as good as their word of the night before, and gave us a breakfast of roast lamb, chupatties, and another generous bowl of barley-broth. A good whack of the two former articles was transferred to the growing store in our emergency bag.

We found the courtyard of the post full of Tartars and Arabs; and a good number of scattered individuals were visible moving steadily along the road, all in a westerly direction. Just outside the gate we stumbled on a small party of Germans. This gave us another chance of delay. They told us they were a wireless section, and obligingly furnished us with the latest details of the German advance in France. A little more time was taken up in persuading them to accept a message for British Headquarters which the Pilot wrote down, stating that we were unwounded and asking that our kit might be dropped. They demurred at this, but eventually took the message without making any promises: probably in order to get rid of us without further trouble. They refused to give us any news of the operations in progress. But we knew that the only wireless station thereabouts had been at the town we left at midday yesterday.

We decided to walk the first part of the march in order to keep our feet hard, although it meant having four extremely smelly Tartars in very close proximity, one on each side and two just behind, all always unpleasantly casual about handling their rifles. When riding the camels one was at least out of nose-shot of them. Half a mile on we came on a small mixed unit laagered by the side of the road, among them about twenty white men of various ranks. Three officers were standing together inspecting the outspanned animals. One, a cheerful lathy individual with a red goatee, after our first salutation, opened the ball with, "Well, have you heard the news from France? You're being properly smashed there." Next to him was a tall bearded man with thick spectacles and three ribbons—Gallipoli, Iron Cross, and a yellow and white which we did not know. There is something to be said for the systematic similarity in the general design of German medal ribbons, with their two white stripes on backgrounds of various colours; at least, it prevents the noisy polychromatic squabbles that are visible on the chests of many British officers to-day. They told us they were a Telegraph Detachment; but as they were busy and uncommunicative we were unable to waste much time here, so passed on. And at that time two magpies flew up on to the rocks. Magpies are not common in Mesopotamia.

A clatter of hoofs behind made us look round. It was a comic figure that was overtaking us, the complete German tourist of caricature: a monstrous cloth sunshade flapping wildly from the back of his flat cap, green spectacles, water-bottle, haversacks, map-case, revolver, strapped on all round him gear of all kinds which banged up and down on his flanks as he bumped perspiringly along. The whole outfit was insecurely balanced on top of a pair of bloated saddle-bags astride of a big grey mule, the latter being most inadequately controlled by a picketing chain secured to its headstall.

We called out "Good morning," and were promptly swept away by the blast of—nautical—language that followed. He had evidently learned his English in America, not in a Sunday-school. There was something particularly incongruous in the man's pink-and-white baby complexion and the blaspheny which poured forth as he leaned back to take in, hand over hand, his steering chain. In a mist of profanity he navigated his craft round in diminishing circles till he brought it to a standstill alongside of us, its head pulled round hard against his starboard knee.

It was an entertaining half hour that followed. Our breezy mariner was full of grievances, and far past the stage when he could refrain from the relief of unburdening himself. He had been set upon by the Arabs last night as the

Germans were evacuating the town, and only just escaped with his life and what he had on him. After three years in the place! Three years! And he hadn't been given a single decoration. Not a single one. Jealousy of superiors. And these ungrateful Arabs—after three years' experience of Germans to take the first opportunity of looting their quarters. Yes, and after three years' acquaintance to try to murder him. If he hadn't been so nippy he'd have been shot.

Yes, he reckoned he spoke English pretty slick. He had been skipper of a big Hamburg-Boston boat four years, until the war; had been navigating match-boxes on this paltry trickle (modesty, unfortunately, prevents reproduction of the extremely forcible metaphor he used here) of a river ever since. And now just when, at last, they had given him three motor-boats, and he had got two big guns safely down-stream, and landed below all correct, beggared if the whole lascivious lot hadn't been collared by the English Army.

His language was lurid; it was of a saltiness impossible to convey. But his cigarettes were unexceptionable. Anecdote, abuse, reminiscence poured forth to a continuous accompaniment of the most original and devastating blasphemy. The mule, however, was quite untroubled thereby, and continued to display that alert aloof air so characteristic of these animals. We left the Master-Mariner eventually in a haze of violent invective, rocking precariously on his high perch as he heaved furiously at his steering-chain, whilst the mule trotted diagonally, in bored indifference, towards the hills. And for all we know, he may still be thus occupied. At least, it is certain that he is swearing—swearing endlessly.

Two magpies flew across the road, and then another pair. A little farther on we passed through a big caravan of Arabs resting in the river-plain. They were a striking crowd, and all seemed to have new clothes on; all their camel gear also and saddle-bags looked fresh and clean. It gave them an unreal sort of theatrical appearance; and, most improbable of all, in the middle, three or four stately old Bedawin were walking about shading themselves under pink parasols!

All these strange omens, which would have struck the most ignorant Roman Legionary as sure presages of some impending act of the gods, passed before our sophisticated eyes merely in jesting-wise. Indeed, when one o'clock came, and we halted for fifteen minutes' rest on the river's edge, we had begun to feel our escape would now depend entirely on our own exertions.

We were here well over a hundred miles from the British front line we had left. The only things that could possibly reach us now were aeroplanes. And it would soon be getting a bit far for them. Moreover, no really practicable

plan of action for them was apparent, even if they should succeed in recognising us.

At this point the rocky hillside came steeply down to within a hundred yards of the river, and the narrow strip of plain between was covered with scattered bushes. Our escort had been getting more and more jumpy and truculent as the day progressed. Various causes had contributed to this. Their conversations with the people we had passed; the passage overhead of five of the abhorred "Tyara" half an hour previously; and, above all, a large party of mounted Tartars who had just hurried past us and galloped on ahead without stopping, only pausing to shout a few short sentences. So when the time for the halt came, it was with difficulty that we persuaded them to let us go down to the river's edge to wash our feet. They did eventually let us go under close escort of two men, one of whom amused himself by letting off his rifle into the water alongside of us. As we sat there, our covey of planes came back, high up; and one of them playfully loosed off a drum in the direction of our party before they all sailed away homewards. That was the last we should see of any of our own folk for many a long day. It about put the lid on the state of our feelings.

The camels, which we had decided to ride now, as it was getting hot, were grazing about twenty yards apart, and the usual *tamasha* took place in getting them to sit down. They got up as savagely as ever directly we were on. Most of the Tartars were collecting themselves and their kit after their "easy," when crack-cr-cr-cr-crack-crack-crack! went machine-gun fire at close quarters. There was just one moment of confusion amongst the escort bolting for the cover of the rocks a few yards away. That was enough for us. We were off the camels and racing through the scrub towards the river at once. Ballast was looking up for the aeroplane, when Pilot gripped his arm and turned him. There—on the road, only a hundred yards back, was a Lamb car. That hundred yards must have been covered in pretty near record time. Whilst the machine-gun was busy with our Tartar friends we tumbled into the leading car—*free*.

III.

The train of events had been as follows. The British operations had met with complete success. The whole Turkish Division had been rounded up — staff, foot, and guns. The Dolphins had got right across their line of retreat. The surrender had taken place, and the whole show was over by dawn of the day before. The Dolphins

had come over fifty miles in twenty-four hours. Not content with that, however, they shoved on another forty next day, reached the town, and scooped the whole of the Turkish ammunition dump there. Thence the Lambs had been pushed on, with orders to find us and bring us back—special petrol arrangements being made to give them a hundred miles' radius of action. Information in plenty had been available, and plans had been laid accordingly. These were put into practice so neatly and quietly that their opening burst of machine-gun fire was literally a bolt from the blue.

Our run of luck had been extraordinary all through: it was perhaps most phenomenal at the finish. If we had been marching at the time, if we had been on foot, if even we had not happened to have just mounted the camels with the slight consequent confusion that always resulted, we should certainly have been shot down by our guards before they cleared. Had not the place of our midday halt been a point where the hills come exceptionally near the river, so that the undulations gave some cover; or had there been no growth of scrub jungle there—the only such cover we had seen—the armoured cars could never have got up to us unobserved. Above all, success had depended on the extremely able way in which the Lamb Commander had grasped the situation and seized the exact psychological moment for action.

THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE.

BY CHARLES WHIBLEY.

THE English have lately been charged, officially, with neglecting the study of living languages, with shutting themselves up in insular arrogance, with being content to cast a grudging, transitory eye upon Latin and Greek, and to ignore the splendid achievements of the modern world. Mr Tilley's treatise upon 'The Dawn of the French Renaissance,'[1] therefore, comes to us at an opportune moment. It is welcome not only for the sound scholarship and admirable taste which it displays, but because it refutes a general and undeserved charge. The French and the English are approaching a mutual understanding by more paths than one. On either side the Channel the universities are proving a wise appreciation of the literature of their neighbours and Allies. And Mr Tilley has played his part well in studying profoundly a little-known period of French art.

In calling his book 'The Dawn of the French Renaissance,' Mr Tilley has accepted perforce the common terminology of the historians. Had he not accepted it, his purpose might have been obscure. But it would have been better for the proper understanding of literature that the word "Renaissance" had never been used. And, since it has been persistently opposed to the imagined "Dark Ages," it is responsible for a vast deal of error in history and criticism. "The ages are all equal," said William Blake, "but genius is always above its age." There is no wiser clue than that to lead us through the labyrinth of literature. And the term "Renaissance" was especially ill-chosen, because it implies re-birth after death, light out of darkness. The beauty and intelligence of the world did not die, and the darkest age was not without illumination. But happily there are signs to-day of a clearer interpretation. Pater, for instance, admits an earlier Renaissance than that of the fifteenth century, and traces the "outbreak of the human spirit" far into the Middle Age itself. We no longer believe with J. A. Symonds that "the arts and inventions, the knowledge and the books, which suddenly became vital at the time of the Renaissance, had long lain neglected on the shores of the Dead Sea which we call the Middle Ages." That was no Dead Sea upon which Chaucer, and Froissart, and Villon sailed their ships; the arts and in-

[1] 'The Dawn of the French Renaissance,' by Arthur Tilley, M.A. Cambridge: At the University Press.

ventions had not been forgotten on any shore frequented by the heroic builders of the Gothic cathedrals, by the artists of illuminated manuscripts and storied windows. No longer is the term "Gothic" a term of barbarous reproach. No longer does any sane critic involve in impenetrable darkness a thousand years of effort. Poets and architects differed, with the passage of time, in style and intention, but seldom was genius an outcast from the earth. And we shall best appreciate the wayward progress of the arts if we escape from the tyranny of periods, and repeat once more the saying of Blake: "The ages are all equal, but genius is always above its age."

Not even of a knowledge of classical literature may what is known as the Renaissance claim an exclusive possession. The Court of Charlemagne took a just pride in its writers of prose and poetry, and showed an enthusiastic delight in the classical models which were before it. Alcuin and his fellows were humanists, despite their ignorance of Greek. Virgil and Lucretius they knew, and they could not if they would escape the influence of Plato at second-hand. As Mr W. P. Ker says, "the paradox of the Dark Ages is that this period, which at first seems to be so distinctly marked as a gap and interval between the ancient and modern worlds, is in its educational work and general culture both ancient and modern. Most of the intellectual things on which it set most store are derived, on the one hand, from ancient Greece, and on the other are found surviving as respectable commonplaces, scarcely damaged, in the Augustan Ages of Louis XIV. and Queen Anne."

And if the danger of dividing up the world of poetry and intellect into arbitrary periods needed confirmation, it could be afforded by Mr Tilley's own book. He chooses the year 1494 to mark the Renaissance in France. It is then that he sees upon the eastern horizon the first glimmer of the dawn. On September the 2nd Charles VIII. crossed the Alps; seven days later he arrived at Asti; and from that time Guicciardini dates the beginning of "the innumerable calamities" which overwhelmed his country. At Asti it was that an attempt was made to dissuade Charles VIII. from his expedition, and it was at this dramatic moment that, in Mr Tilley's view, the French Renaissance began. But Mr Tilley himself is beset by doubts. He deals, in one of the most interesting chapters of his book, with the "premonitions" of this Renaissance. He admits that the Princes of the House of Valois had encouraged learning more than a hundred and fifty years before the adventurous journey of Charles VIII. The library of Charles V. was famous, and his brother Jean, Duc de Berry, surpassed him in the justice and opulence of his taste. In 1396, says Renan, cited by Mr

Tilley, "on se croirait à deux pas de la Renaissance dont on est separé par plus d'un siècle." But how were they separated from the Renaissance, who were already familiar with the works of Aristotle and Plato, of Ovid and Lucan, of Virgil and Terence, of Seneca and Valerius Maximus? These are authors enough upon which to base the claim of humanism, and if there were no enlightened sovereign to take up the work of patronage when Charles V. laid it down, if a period of warfare interrupted the study of letters, those were the accidents of history, and they do not change the spirit and temper of the time.

Moreover, the greatest names mentioned in Mr Tilley's book belong in point of time to what are still called the Middle Ages. Alain Chartier, though he was born before the end of the fourteenth century, is a devout student of the ancients. Seneca was his model, both in the style and in the search after moral commonplaces, and he wrote a prose which is classical in both senses. Nor can we drive into the obscurity of barbarism the witty cynicism of Charles d'Orléans, the gaiety of the 'Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,' or the closely observed reality of that mordant little masterpiece, 'Les Quinze Joyes de Mariage.' Whencever the inspiration of these works came, it did not come from the darkness of ignorance. Their authors loved the light and lived in it. They clamoured from no re-birth, for the seeds of death were not in them. They had the genius which was above its age.

The poet comes and goes as he chooses, recking little of the "movements" which it is the historian's business to note. Villon disappears from knowledge thirty years before Mr Tilley marks the beginning of the French Renaissance, and yet he belongs not to the Middle Ages but to all time. Villon is a modern of the moderns, because he speaks to us in his own voice of beauty and sincerity. It is true that he knew no Greek, and only such Latin as he might pick up in the University of Paris; but he was no worse off than Keats; and the one recked as little as the other of any movement in history or literature. The flame of genius burned clearly within each of them, and makes them part of the universal inheritance. Had Villon been rich in all the knowledge that was being gathered in his day on the other side of the Alps, he could not have turned to better account the life of the tavern and the prison, as he knew it. That he knew that life better than any other was an accident. What was essential to him was the poet's genius. He had no greater need to learn than had Keats, for being a poet he divined all things. With equal passion and pathos he could write a ballade for his mother, *pour prier nostre dame*—

"Femme je suis povrette et ancienne,
Ne riens ne sçay; oncques lettre me leuz,"

or describe the regrets of La Belle Heaulmiaire—

"Ainsi le bon temps regretons
Entre nous, pauvres vieilles sottes,
Assises bas, à croppetons
Tout en ung tas comme pelottes,
A petit feu de chevenottes,
Tost allumées, tost estainctes ;
Et jadis fusmes si mignottes !
Ainsi en prend à maintz et maintes."

And it should be remembered that Clement Marot, the first of the poets to win a place in the French Renaissance, was the editor and panegyrist of Villon. The works of Villon, said he, are "of such an art, so full of good doctrine, and so finely painted in a thousand beautiful colours, that time, which effaces all, has not effaced them, and still less shall it efface them presently and hereafter, when the good writings of France shall be better known and collected." This is a noble tribute composed by a poet who has been placed by the historians on the other side of the hedge, and yet urged the young poets of his time to cull Villon's sentences like beautiful flowers.

Truly, the poets who followed Villon may have been nearer to the Renaissance; truly, also, they are farther from poetry. So much is said, not in any opposition to Mr Tilley, but to suggest that too great a burden should not be laid upon a convenient word. Nor can it be said that the Chronicle of Comines was conceived and written in the outer darkness of barbarism. It does not recall to mind the shores of the Dead Sea. In spite of the fact that it belongs to the time which was before Charles VIII.'s visit to Italy, it seems still a fresh and living book. To dismiss it as "mediæval" is to misunderstand its scope and purpose. It is far nearer to our own time and to universal acceptance, for instance, than the Chronicles of Stow and Speed, which it preceded by a century. There is nothing of the spirit of the "big gooseberry" about it. Comines is singularly free from the vice of anecdotage. He is no gossip bent upon whiling away an idle hour. He is a statesman as well as a historian, and it was his intention not only to celebrate the genius of his master, Louis XI., but to set forth a sound method of statecraft. His love of character and his passion for politics separate him sharply from the chroniclers. He sketches, with a keen perception, the kings of his times, and also the countries. He finds that the English are choleric, after the fashion of those who inhabit cold countries, that they hunt fiercely after offices and estates, that with them everything is in extreme, that they lack discretion and are not so subtle in treaties as the French. He notes in the Italians a love of change, jealousy, and avarice. He says that it is in their nature to favour the stronger side, and that the best that may be expected from them is neutrality. Towards men as towards peoples he strives to be just. He spent the greater part of his active life in opposition to the Duke of Burgundy, once his master; and he sketches his character without a hint of malevolence. Even though

he deplores the Duke's lack of wisdom, he praises unstintingly his noble qualities. "Undoubtedly," says he, "he was endued with many goodly virtues, for never was Prince more desirous to entertain noble men and to keep them in good order than he. His liberality seemed not great, because he made all men partakers thereof. Never Prince gave audience more willingly to his servants and subjects than he. While I served him he was not cruel, but grew marvellous cruel towards his end, which was a sign of short life. . . . Covetous he was of glory, which was the chief cause which made him move so many wars, for he desired to imitate those ancient Princes whose fame continueth till this present. Lastly, hardy was he and a valiant, as any man that lived in his time, but all his great enterprises and attempts ended with himself and turned to his own loss and dishonour, for honour goeth ever with the victory." Honour goeth ever with the victory — that is a true saying, true to-day as when it was written, and it is a saying which we should do well to ponder now, when a German victory would establish upon a firm foundation "honour rooted in dishonour."

Comines is just not only to the Duke of Burgundy. He is just also to Edward IV. of England, whom he finds the handsomest and most munificent prince that ever he saw, though too much inclined to take his ease. But the hero of his life and book is Louis XI. He recognised the heavy burden which was laid upon him. "I knew this mighty king," he wrote, "and served him in the flower of his age, and in his great prosperity; yet never saw I him free from toil of body and trouble of mind." He praises his policy and his conduct, noting that he was always ready to humble himself at the call of wisdom, for "when pride rideth before, shame and damage follow after." A king, modest in prosperity, brave in adversity, he knew whom he ought to fear, and was free from panic. So he gave his life to the profit of France, and dreamed of emulating Charlemagne, whom he thought he resembled, as many lesser men since have thought they resembled Napoleon. And Comines sketches his superstitions and his craft and his cruelties, leaving the balance of good always upon the right side, until he comes to his death at his castle of Plessis. "After all these fears, sorrows, and suspicions," he writes, "God (according to His accustomed goodness) wrought a miracle upon him, healing him both in soul and body, for He took him out of this miserable world, being perfect of sense, understanding, and memory, having received all his sacraments, without all grief to man's judgment, and talking continually even within a *Pater Noster* while of his death."

Such is the writer who Mr Tilley, following Brunetière, says, "had nothing in him of the Renaissance." If this be

true, it is true also that Comines has what is far greater—a universality of interest. He is part of the world's inheritance. He is read to-day not only by those whose business it is to study the records of history, but by those who care for the literary expression of character. Whether he was an artist in words or not, it is certain that his style fits his matter perfectly. He wrote always as a man of affairs, and produced the effect of a pious, practical statesmanship, at which he aimed. What Montaigne wrote in his own copy is true enough. Here it is in Florio's English: "In him you shall find a pleasing-sweet and gently-gliding speech, fraught with a purely-sincere simplicity, his narration pure and unaffected, and wherein the Author's unspotted good meaning doth evidently appear, void of all manner of vanity or ostentation speaking of himself, and free from all affection or envy speaking of others." That is high praise from a wise judge, and it admits Comines into the company of the elect. But, says Mr Tilley, Comines' religion is "the simple, inconsistent, unspiritual religion of the ordinary mediæval man." Now, it is true that for Comines God is the only ruler of Princes. He believes that whatever is done in this world is done with God's sanction and approval. At the very moment that he sets forth the value of archers to an army, he insists that "God shows battles are in His hand." Even Louis XI. is but a favoured puppet of the Deity. But this simple reverence is not exclusively mediæval. It has belonged and will always belong to statesmen and soldiers of a certain type. Comines and his master were, like Cromwell, "practical mystics," and with the best will in the world we cannot put Cromwell back into the Middle Ages. And even to-day we find leaders, on either side, invoking God to fight their battles for them, and the invocation is hypocritical only in those who make their Deity responsible for their own flagrant misdeeds.

It is one of the puzzles of history that Comines and Machiavelli were writing at the same time, in ignorance of each other's purpose, treatises which dealt with the duties and ambitions of Princes. That Machiavelli saw more deeply into the sequence and purposes of events, that he had a wider outlook into the past, is obviously true. But his superiority came not from a difference in sympathy or period from Comines, but from his own genius and temperament. After his own fashion, Comines attempted to construct that which came easily to Machiavelli—a philosophy of statecraft. He would, if he could, have regulated the friendships of sovereigns; he defined the duties of ambassadors and spies, and he glorified wisdom and suspicion. "Think you," he asks, "that God hath established the office

of a King or a Prince to be executed by such beasts as glory in saying: I am no scholar; I trust my Council well enough, and refer all matters to them, and so without further answer depart to their sports and pastimes?" That was not the kingly part, as Comines wished to see it played; and though he lacked the profound knowledge and the supreme intelligence of Machiavelli, he was busy with the same work as engrossed the author of 'The Prince.' Nor did he go without recognition. His book became the breviary of kings before it ever saw the dignity of print. Charles V. carried it with him always; and Francis I. disapproved of its appearance in type, because he thought it should remain the exclusive property of kings.

Thus it seems a small matter whether we should place Comines in a pen labelled "Renaissance" or not. The truth is that Villon and Comines on the one hand, Ronsard and Rabelais on the other, belong all to the same age—the age of genius. And it is noteworthy that all that came between them in the literature of France has little other merit than the merit of curiosity. And this is the result not of the old spirit nor of the new, not of schools or periods, but the result of the accidents which decreed that Villon and Comines, Ronsard and Rabelais, should be born in France at the times in which they were. Thus, again, we find an illustration of Blake's saying that genius is above its age, and are content.

Of the intervening period of the Dawn of the Renaissance Mr Tilley has given us an admirable account, which is all the more welcome because it is a period seldom relieved by great names. With a scholarly hand he has sketched the rise of humanism in France, and has given us deft portraits of Gaguin, the student of Latin, of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, the Aristotelian and restorer of philosophy, of whom a panegyrist says: "He came forth like the rising sun to dissipate the darkness and arouse the youth of France from its deep lethargy. He was the first to shed the light of purer learning on liberal studies, and to raise them from their fallen state to a place of honour." And so he passes to Guillaume Budé, the accomplished Grecian, the stalwart champion of scholarship in France, the author of 'De Asse,' and the correspondent of Rabelais. Then he describes the work which Erasmus, the greatest teacher and inspirer of Europe, did for humanism in France. "The New Learning was for Erasmus an instrument of life," says Mr Tilley, in an excellent passage. "This clear conception of the uses of Pagan literature for a Christian society was of the greatest service to France. For a large proportion of the early French humanists, under the influence of their theological training, had an uneasy misgiving as

to the fitness of pagan literature for the education of a Christian. Some, indeed, found relief in the theory that ancient literature was an allegory. But Erasmus taught them a truer view, that it is the moral seriousness of the best pagan literature that makes it a fitting instrument of Christian education." That is wisely said, and our debt to Erasmus is not yet paid. We still owe much of our scholarship to his prudent teaching and good example, and if, obedient to clamour, we now throw away what he taught us, we shall show ourselves ungrateful to the greatest man of letters of his time.

It is not Mr Tilley's fault that, when he leaves scholarship for the field of literature, he is forced to admit its barrenness. The dawn of the literary Renaissance in France was grey indeed. Such poets as there were called themselves very properly *rhétoriqueurs*. Their works were formal to insipidity, and of all the writers of the time only Lemaire de Bruges, to whom Mr Tilley rightly traces a debt in Rabelais, is worth remembrance. Thus it is in French scholarship that the effects of humanism were earliest and most clearly seen. In no other domain of human energy was so fearless a champion of the new learning and the new taste as Guillaume Budé. In the face of manifold difficulties he became most learned in Greek. The only teacher he had was the incompetent Hermonymus. "I found an old Greek," thus he tells his tale, "or rather he found me, for I paid him a large fee, who could do little more than converse in literary language. But he pronounced and read excellently, and as I heard he was the only Greek in France, I thought him extremely learned. Moreover, he succeeded in exciting my ardour for study by introducing me to Homer and to the names of some other writers." And then came the intercourse with Italy, and the ready access to Greek manuscripts; and Budé spared neither money in buying books nor time in reading them. He took no holidays, and packed into one day the work of a day and a half. His debt to Italy, then, can be easily measured. The arts of architecture and sculpture made a tardier, vaguer entrance into France. The French builders, the masters of their own craft, were naturally disinclined to accept the new fashions of Italy. But gradually Italian artificers made their way across the Alps, and at Amboise and elsewhere gave instruction to the craftsmen of France. The wonderful *châteaux*, which were built from end to end of France, were no longer fortresses; they served not for defence but for the grace of a well-ordered life, and the classical influence, slight though it be, was already upon them. "This contact of the old style with the new," says Mr Tilley, "of French master-masons and workmen, supported by tradition and public sentiment, with Italian architects and decora-

ters under royal patronage, resulted in a blending of the two styles, in which at first Gothic had by far the larger share." But gradually the Italian taste encroached upon the ancient prejudices, and though France always interpreted the new style in her own way, she at last accepted the lessons in architecture which her neighbours had to teach with a whole heart.

As you read Mr Tilley's pages, a pageant of beauty passes before your eyes. The French, who would gladly teach, would always gladly learn. The civilised countries of Europe many centuries ago made an artistic alliance, which has never been broken. Germany has ever lain outside our borders, artistic and moral, as it is outside them to-day. But France, England, and Italy have shared the same ideas, have shared the same movements. In the early days of humanism Erasmus visited London and Cambridge, as well as Paris and Orleans. He held in a single chain the learned men of Europe. He fought for the Greeks against the Trojans with equal force on either side the Channel. And when Italy imposed the new rules of architecture upon France, she imposed them also, with a lighter hand, upon England. But if in the arts of building and painting we have shown our insularity, if, accepting certain influences, we have gone on our own way, if our houses and our furniture always bear an impress which is neither French nor Italian, our literature has not seldom followed the common road. Sometimes we have followed the fashion of France, sometimes France has followed our fashion. The debt which Chaucer owed to the French we have since repaid with interest. What would the great romantic movement have been had France lacked the encouragement of England? Who shall estimate the influence of Walter Scott and Byron upon the Frenchmen of 1830?

And loyally have we exchanged masterpieces. If Shakespeare for some centuries fought a losing battle in France, he has won the victory at last, and no poet is more generously appreciated than he across the Channel. The Germans make his works an excuse for cumbrous annotation or false patriotism. They overload him with commentary, or they claim him, insolently, for their own. The French recognise him as a poet, and do their best to understand him. Who, for instance, has written of late more wisely about Shakespeare than M. André Suarès? And we in return have annexed Rabelais, by right of conquest. Not only have we studied his merry book with goodwill and understanding, but in Sir Thomas Urquhart's version we have come near to matching the style of the original. Florio, moreover, has made Montaigne a true Englishman, and we gladly remember that he carried in his veins a few drops of English blood, that he once listened to

the discourses of the rugged George Buchanan. Nor can we keep an exclusive hand upon Defoe, whose 'Robinson Crusoe' was but a year old when he began to delight the children of France, and whose 'Moll Flanders' found at last a perfect interpreter in Marcel Schwöb, scholar and man of letters. And have we not given our Dickens in exchange for Dumas? Some writers there are who will not cross the Channel. The works of Swift, we are told, lose their force and meaning when they reach Calais; and Racine, for a very different reason, is not always treated in London with the respect which his beauty and order deserve. But these and other exceptions, due to different temperaments and different trainings, are of small account. And even they will disappear with a wider sympathy and a deeper study. The truth is that the Alliance, which holds together France and Italy and England, is an alliance not only of arms but of arts, and it will last long after the signing of the peace. None of the three will close its ears or its eyes to the influence in art or learning of the other two. And such works of research as Mr Tilley's, reciprocated in France by English studies, no less intelligent and profound, will strengthen the bonds, already strong, which unite us with our friends and our allies.

ESCAPED!

ADVENTURES IN GERMAN CAPTIVITY.

BY WALLACE ELLISON.

III.

"Sam," said Mr Pickwick, after a little hesitation; "listen to what I am going to say, Sam."

"Cert'nly, sir," rejoined Mr Weller; "fire away, sir."

"I have felt from the first, Sam," said Mr Pickwick with much solemnity, "that this is not the place to bring a young man to."

"Nor an old un neither, sir," observed Mr Weller.

"You're quite right, Sam," said Mr Pickwick. . . . "It is better for those young men, in every point of view, that they should not remain here."

THAT is how Mr Pickwick and Sam Weller felt about the Fleet Prison, and that is exactly how I felt, as time went on, about the Stadt Vogtei Prison in Berlin. The prison was most emphatically not the place to bring a young man to, and it was better, I felt, in every point of view, that I should not remain there.

We had failed, it is true, in our attempt to get out, but if we had done nothing else, we had at any rate demonstrated the practicability of our theory. The prison was not escape-proof. So much was certain.

As winter was approaching, it behoved us to set to work as soon as possible on fresh plans. The winters in Germany are severe, and we felt that it would be courting disaster to set out, in very cold weather, on an escape which might involve much lying out in the open. To be seen during the day in the danger zone near the frontier would be fatal to success, and, in view of the measures which were being taken by the German military and police authorities to recapture escapers, it would be equally fatal to leave the train at a station sufficiently close to the frontier to enable us to cross the same night.

We abandoned one scheme after the other on the ground of its impracticability.

One afternoon I was coming up the wearisome flights of stairs which led up to our cell on the fourth floor, when I was accosted in a furtive fashion by a man, S——. He was a queer fellow, an engineer by profession, a bigamist, I believe, by sheer force of habit, and as far as nationality was concerned an out and out cosmopolitan. Interned as an Englishman, he had been brought to the prison from Ruhleben Camp on some charge or other, and had been frequently heard to say that he was determined to escape. He had lived a long time in South Africa, Belgium, and Germany, spoke excellent

German, fair Flemish, indifferent French, and abominable English. I had known for some time that he wished to see me, but I had deliberately avoided meeting him, because I doubted the sincerity of his desire to escape, and, in any event, was pledged to my friends. On this particular occasion, however, there was no escape from him, and, impelled too by curiosity as to what his plans might be, I followed him into his cell. I soon came to the conclusion that his desire to escape was genuine. There was the prospect before him of a long prison sentence, and he was bent upon cheating the police of their prey. I listened as he unfolded his schemes, talking little myself, except occasionally to drop a word of criticism or ask a question.

When he had finished I told him that I thought his scheme unsound, and gave my reasons. He shrugged his shoulders and sat very disconsolately on his stool, with his hands spread out on his knees.

"Well, what do *you* think is the best plan? Have *you* a better idea?" he asked.

With very little seriousness in my words I said—

"Yes; I think I have. Find some way of getting out of the front door, out of the main exit."

He grew serious. We discussed possibilities for a while, and then I left him.

Although I had made the suggestion with a serious face I meant it mainly as a joke, but the idea struck root in his ingenious mind, and it was through the main door that we escaped from the prison about three weeks later.

In the narration of this escape I am free to give fairly full details of what took place, partly owing to the fact that all who participated in it are now in safety, thanks either to subsequent escape or release, and also because the escape was undertaken in such a way that the German authorities learned very soon afterwards the lines on which we had worked. Conditions in the prison were changed immediately after our escape was discovered, and steps were taken to cut off the main exit for ever afterwards as a possible avenue of escape. The interned were no longer permitted to use the yard at any time from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. when not in solitary confinement, but were passed in by the sentry at stated times, the yard door being kept locked by him.

All the courtyards in the prison are inside the huge block of buildings. There is no wall fencing in the prison from the street. One steps at once from the street into the gloom of the jail through heavy oaken doors. The first step takes one into a sort of vestibule. Facing the outer doors, inside the vestibule, are other oaken doors leading into the exercise-yard for our part of the prison. To the left of the entrance are two steps and then a corridor not more than twenty paces in length leading into the administrative office. The office is used by the

lieutenant, sergeant, warders, and corporals who guard the prisoners. To the right of the entrance is another corridor, but in our time the door leading into it from the vestibule was usually closed and locked. Along the two corridors mentioned were, on the one side, heavily barred non-transparent windows giving on to the Direksen Strasse, and on the other side the doors of cells on the ground floor. The third cell along the corridor to the left of the entrance was the porter's cell, where a German corporal armed with bayonet and Browning revolver was kept on guard day and night. After our escape the first cell was made the porter's cell, and a special window was built into the wall, so that when fitted with an ingenious arrangement of mirrors the sentry could see at once if any one attempted to open the main door. Each time we escaped quite a lot of Prussian officials were kept busy trying to catch us, and, when they had locked us up again, trying to devise ways and means of preventing another attempt. I suppose it all belonged to the conduct of war, and that we may have been "doing our bit" after all, "tying up" and annoying an infinitesimal part of the Kaiser's army for a day or two!

From the description I have given of the prison inside the main gate, it will be obvious that in attempting to open the main door certain risks would have to be faced. There would always be the possibility of being seen by the sentry in the cell close to the main gate. There was the danger of persons coming from the yard into the vestibule. There was the risk of the door of the administrative office—twenty paces along the straight corridor—being opened, when all would be lost, owing to the fact that a German corporal, and frequently the lieutenant in charge of the jail, sat at their desks in such a position as to command an uninterrupted view of the main entrance. At any moment the door on the right-hand side of the main gate, the one leading into the right-hand portion of the prison, might be opened by a warder passing through; and finally, there came the risk—against which all the forethought in the world would not enable us to guard—of a transport of prisoners arriving at the door at the very moment of our escape. To a certain extent, by means of a careful disposition of forces, and by a rehearsal of the right sort of story to tell, in the event of being surprised before we had actually opened the door, we thought it possible to guard against all risks except the last. There we should have to take a sporting chance.

One afternoon, when I entered our cell after an aimless walk through the smelly, monotonous galleries, I was accosted by one of my cell companions, who said to me—

"G—— has been here to see you, and would like you to go down to his cell before lock-

ing-up time, as he has some sketches he would like to show to you."

I smiled, and my friend smiled. G—— had escaped some time before from Ruhleben Camp, along with his friend C——, and, possessing the two invaluable assets, from an escaper's point of view, of a perfect command of the language, and a thorough knowledge of the country and the ways of the people, they succeeded in reaching the Swiss frontier, passed over during the day, but unfortunately, unwittingly walked back into Germany, and were arrested by two German sentries. They had not taken into account that they had crossed the German-Swiss frontier at a point where a narrow tongue of Swiss territory runs into Germany. They had walked into freedom on one side of the tongue and back into bondage on the other side. He and his friend were charged, after capture, with having attempted to bribe the German guards who accompanied them from the Swiss frontier to the Stadt Vogtei Prison in Berlin, and both men, I knew, were eager to avoid the long term of imprisonment which would surely be the consequence of conviction in the Berlin Police Court. At a later date, C——, G——'s companion—after G—— had made good his escape—was tried on a charge of attempted bribery, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He showed me a copy of the judgment, in which the judge who had tried the case had put his signature to the following astounding sentence:—

"It must not be overlooked that the crime committed by the defendant is a direct consequence of his internment, but it must also be borne in mind that he belongs to that nation which is responsible for this war, and an offence of this character must be proceeded against with the very utmost severity of the law (*muss mit der unbedingtsten Schroffheit der Gesetze entgegengetreten werden*)."

C——, who had lived thirty-five years in Germany, had been decidedly pro-German in his sympathies for some time after the outbreak of war, but if he had not become anti-German before the date of his trial, he certainly swung round when he found himself face to face with so wicked a mockery of the very elements of justice.

I say that I smiled when I heard that G—— had been to see me and wished to show me sketches. I went down to his cell, and had not been in conversation with him long before I learned that he had certain proposals to make to me regarding escape from the prison. He said that three, including S——, had decided to escape through the main door, that a duplicate key was almost ready, and all that remained to be done before the night of the escape was to make perfectly sure that the key would fit. While the stage rehearsals were going on, one man was to hold the door leading from the exercise-yard into the vestibule, in order that no one

should come in from that direction. Two others were to stand to the left of the main door on the two steps leading into the corridor, at the end of which was the administrative office, and were to indulge in casual conversation in a nonchalant fashion, drowning any noise the key might make when turned in the lock, and so prevent the suspicions of the sentry, in his cell close by, being aroused. They were a man short, and I was asked whether I would undertake to help them with the rehearsals, and also on their real escape, by holding the door leading to the vestibule from the exercise-yard. At that stage it was not suggested that I should become one of the escaping party. My functions were simply to hold the door, and as soon as the three had escaped, rush upstairs to my cell. I smiled at so naïve a request, by acceding to which I should be running all the risks and enjoying precious little of the fun. I told him so, whereupon he invited me to come with them. We discussed plans in full detail, and I finally obtained permission to co-opt my friend Eric Keith, to whom I was pledged.

Keith and I did not definitely decide to escape with the three until the last moment, though we made all necessary preparations for such an eventuality, and, having been taken fully into confidence, we felt it only right to volunteer to help them in trying the key.

We had some amusing and rather exciting rehearsals. S—— was the man who had had the key made, and to him fell the honour of testing it. G——, Keith, and I stood on the steps and talked in as nonchalant a fashion as we could, while the fifth man held the other door.

S——, doubtless spurred on by his fear of approaching punishment, was very daring but very excitable, and throughout the series of rehearsals in which we participated we were never quite sure whether the key was a misfit, or whether he had failed to make the key turn in the lock because of the trembling of his hands. I have often smiled since at the recollection of how he would turn away from the door and follow us upstairs, muttering in his queer English under his breath—

"'E will go! 'E will go! I know 'e will go," meaning that the key would eventually fit.

After three unsuccessful tests, we hit upon the idea of covering the wards of the key with a thin film of candle-wax, in order that when the key was turned in the lock any obstacle it met would leave the imprint of its shape on the film of wax. That portion of the key had then simply to be filed away.

The fourth test was successful. We did not escape that night, because certain other preparations were not yet complete. We met in many places for the purpose of discussing plans, and finally decided to make the attempt between half-past five and six, on

the evening of the 16th of November 1916.

That day, about a quarter of an hour before our rendezvous with our fellow-conspirators in the exercise-yard, Keith and I decided that we would join the rest in escaping from the prison, and then, in all likelihood, endeavour to escape from the country on our own initiative. We put on our warmest overcoats, and, as we were stuffing into our pockets certain impedimenta we should require on the way, Keith looked at me and said—

"I suppose you are not overlooking the fact that we may both be dead men within a quarter of an hour?"

I nodded. I guessed that he was referring to the possibility of our being shot by the sentry at the very moment of passing through the door, or crossing the street.

It was about half-past five in the evening, and already dark when we entered the yard. We found our fellow-conspirators walking round and round the narrow confine—less than seventy paces round its outer edge—with a most hang-dog look, which would have been intensely amusing had not the whole matter been too serious for laughter. We postponed the laugh for the time being. We joined them once or twice, when whispered consultations took place.

Our first move on arriving in the yard was to ascertain who was the corporal on duty inside the main entrance. We saw to our dismay that he was a German corporal, named Behnert, who, we knew, had insisted upon being furnished with a Browning revolver if he accepted sentry duty there, and he had boasted on one occasion that he would shoot dead on the spot any man whom he found trying to escape through the main door. I confess that this made me feel very uncomfortable, and I think all my confederates, except S——, who was astoundingly determined, felt that we were running enough risks already without facing this additional and very grave one. S——'s determination, however, made us feel ashamed of our nervousness, and with some misgivings we decided to carry on. During the suspense of waiting until the coast was clear, I candidly confess that I did not feel as cool as the proverbial cucumber. The really trying part of an adventure of this kind is not the strain of doing things, but the nerve-trying ordeal of *waiting* to do things.

The yard was crowded when we entered, but shortly afterwards the cry "Essenholen!" rang through the building, and most of the Poles left in order to receive the prison skilly in their cells. We waited until we were almost alone in the yard. Then one of our number opened the door leading into the vestibule, in order to reconnoitre and see that the coast was clear. Evidently the vestibule was empty, for he signalled to the rest to follow. Once inside the vestibule, Keith, G——, and I took up our posts and started a conversation, with a view, as I have said

above, of shielding S—— from any one looking down the corridor from the office, and also with the intention of drowning the sound of the key being turned in the lock. Another man held the door leading from the yard. Keith and I had our suspicions aroused by the presence of a sixth man, as apparently a passive spectator. This man, I knew, was an interned German, who had been running a gambling-hell in Berlin which had shortly before been raided by the police. It was too late, however, to make any protest. S—— had already inserted the key in the lock. We waited and watched, our nerves tense with excitement. The key would not turn. There was no time for another trial. We dared not linger longer, and followed him back into the yard. Keith and I charged him with a breach of faith in admitting a sixth man without having first secured our consent, but he assured us that the man was all right, and in any case had not the intention of leaving Berlin after his escape from the prison. As to his failure to open the door, he thought that in the excitement of the moment he had put in the shank crookedly, though he swore that the key would fit.

"'E will go! I know 'e will go!"

We fell to pacing the yard again, for we had become ill at ease and our minds were filled with a vague fear that our failure to open the door at the crucial moment might perhaps be an omen of approaching disaster. In other words, it is just possible that we had a touch of "cold feet." We had had too much prison to be in first-class escaping condition.

Presently one of our number looked again into the vestibule, and came back with an expression of undisguised disgust on his face.

"The soldiers have just brought in the food for the remand prisoners in the military part of the prison, and their cart fills the vestibule."

"That's bad! They will not take the cart away until well after locking-up time, and they usually leave a sentry beside it," I said. "It seems as though escape is out of the question to-night."

S—— left us in order to reconnoitre.

He came back and said, in an excited whisper—

"Come on! Dere's no soldier dere. De cart was up against de door, but I have shoved him back. Dere's room to get out now. Come on."

Away we went once more into the vestibule and took our appointed places. S—— glanced round before he put the key into the lock. The coast was clear. While he was opening the door the Lieutenant's orderly passed into the office, but we were covering S—— and he noticed nothing unusual. We were close to the sentry's cell, but he did not stir. Perhaps our casual conversation served, as we intended it should, to drown the noise made by the turning of the key in the lock.

Wonder of wonders, the door

opened! S—— swiftly withdrew the key, and without glancing round slipped out into the street. We followed, one by one, Keith and I coming last.

The arrangement had been that we should on no account run lest we should arouse the suspicions of any one passing by, but for a second or two we all clean forgot the arrangement and ran. Happily, the street was fairly empty. Thirty or forty paces to the left of the exit was a side street. All, except Keith and me, made for the street in order to jump on to the first tram-car. We, however, had decided to cut adrift from the rest, and slowing down, we crossed the street, trying hard to walk as unconcernedly as though we had never known the inside of a jail.

It was a queer feeling that came over one. It seemed beyond belief that we had at last succeeded in escaping from the hated place, and every second we were conscious that a bullet might hit us square between the shoulder-blades. Crossing the Diroksen Strasse diagonally to the left, we came to a railway arch and passed through, feeling a good deal easier, though conscious still that we were not yet safe from pursuit. Only when we had turned round two other corners did we feel any real relief from the great tension. By that time we were lost. Neither of us knew Berlin well, but we wandered on, conscious of a tremor as we passed a policeman, fearing lest he should ask for our military papers. Before long we found ourselves in the famous Unter den Linden near the Dom, and, as we discovered later, passed quite close by the Berlin *Kommandantur*.

We had arranged a rendezvous with S—— and G—— in the Wilhelms Hallen Restaurant, near the Zoological Gardens Station, and, after inquiry from several people, we managed to find a tram which took us there. It was late at night, and we did not see a great deal of street life in Berlin. On arrival at the restaurant, which was quite a fashionable one, we found our two confederates waiting for us, and sat down to drink beer, smoke cigarettes, and discuss plans. S—— had in his possession a receipt for some very necessary articles of ours which had somehow or other found their way from prison to a certain place in Berlin. We here made the fatal error of trusting our accomplice to too great an extent. He suggested that we should meet again at ten in the Café Josty, opposite the Wilhelms Hallen Restaurant, and said that he would arrange in the meantime to find us quarters for the night. We had no papers, and therefore thought it unwise in the extreme to endeavour to procure a room in any hotel. In the meantime Keith and I were to go off, before the shops closed, to make certain necessary purchases for our final tramp to the frontier. We left, and went straight to a kind of Harrod's or Selfridge's

—the Kaufhaus des Westens—in one of the principal thoroughfares of Berlin, the Tauentzienstrasse, and there bought such things as rucksacks, water-bottles, and two very sheddy-looking sleeping sacks. The latter, we had decided, were absolutely essential, if our plans involved our spending one day or more lying out in the open.

The weather was bitterly cold, and it seemed likely that we should have snow. While we were making these purchases from a shopgirl, on one of the upper floors, a shopwalker came along and addressed us.

"These things going to the Front, gentlemen?" he inquired quite affably.

"Yes," said my friend, who spoke perfect German. "As a matter of fact, we are off soon to Roumania." (We had heard of the big German offensive against Roumania which was taking place just about that time.)

"There, at any rate," added Keith, "we are making pretty rapid progress."

"Yes," said the shopwalker, with an eloquent shrug of the shoulders and a most sad intonation. "But the d——d English! Every time we come up against them, things seem to go wrong."

We agreed, of course, that the English were a particularly obnoxious people. Our friend the enemy seemed to be thoroughly weary of the war. We did not spend too much time in conversation with him.

We made no attempt to buy food, because we thought we should have sufficient in the parcel we hoped to procure with the receipt we should get from S——. We bought a large, cheap suit-case big enough to contain all our purchases, and went from the Kaufhaus des Westens direct to the Zoological Gardens Station, in order to deposit our luggage there and call for it later in the evening. Keith took charge of the receipt. About nine o'clock we accidentally met S—— and G——in front of the Café Josty, and reminded them of the appointment in the café at ten o'clock. They promised to be there.

We spent some time walking about the streets trying to kill time, but finding things rather monotonous we went into the café somewhat earlier than we had intended, and, ordering two cups of coffee, which we suspected was brewed from acorns, and was served without milk or sugar, we sat down at a table in the midst of perhaps a score of others who were seated around us, smoked cigarettes, and read the German illustrated papers. My friend left me in order to have a wash, and the lavatory attendant with whom he entered into conversation said—

"You are not a German?"

My friend looked at him, and said indignantly—

"You would think I was if you saw the wound in my thigh which I received at the Front."

I visited this café on my

last successful escape from Germany, and was interested to notice that 'The Daily Telegraph'—about four days old—was amongst the newspapers stocked by the proprietors for the use of customers.

At ten o'clock no signs of G—— and S——. We waited until eleven, and still they did not come. When they had not put in an appearance at half-past eleven we came to the conclusion that it was time to make a move, and felt justified in assuming that they would not come. When we left the café we felt very disconsolate. The parcel for which S—— held the receipt contained a number of articles in the way of dripping, ship's biscuits, and warm underclothing, which were as near being absolutely essential as anything could be, and there was no prospect whatsoever of being able to replace them.

In the first place, our funds were not large enough, and we had hoped to be able to purchase for me, out of the money we had, a pair of strong walking-boots, as I had left the prison in a thin pair, which were very uncomfortable. There was no possibility of buying these if the money had to be spent on replacing the articles we had lost. From facts we learned later, there is very little doubt that S—— had not played the game. We wandered about the street in front of the café for some time, before we abandoned hope of meeting them, imagining that they would probably arrive later than they had promised. Finally, we abandoned all hope, and, very downhearted, went across to the station, in order to get our suit-case and precious articles for the journey from the left-luggage office. When we arrived there, we found to our consternation that Keith had lost the receipt.

While we were standing in front of the counter, and while Keith was searching through all his pockets for the receipt, a man, who I am absolutely certain was a detective, came and rubbed shoulders with us, and intently watched what was going on. Seeing that our prison was next door to the chief police-station in Berlin, we had had very many opportunities of getting to know the detective type, and there was no doubt whatever, in the mind of either of us, that this man was one. As a matter of fact, we learned, after our recapture, that detectives had been placed on the main stations in Berlin within an hour of our escape, with a view to preventing our departure from the city.

Keith, conscious that he was being watched, made a display of a document, furnished with a Prussian official stamp which he carried in his pocket-book, and I said to him in German in as matter-of-fact a manner as possible—

"You are unable to find the ticket—what?"

He answered in German—

"Yes; I am afraid I have lost it."

To our immense relief the detective turned away, strolled to the counter to watch other people, and then moved about, inquisitively observing the movements of persons passing to and fro in the crowded hall.

We got out into the street as quickly as possible, in order to discuss the serious state of affairs. It was close upon midnight. It seemed futile to go to a hotel, without luggage and without papers; and in view of so many disappointing occurrences at the very outset of our adventures, we felt that we were doomed to failure at the very beginning. While we were wondering where we could possibly spend the night, I remembered the name and address of an unpretentious hotel, where I had once stayed in times of peace. We drove there in a cab, having decided that we would say we had come from Elberfeld or Hannover, and that we had had the misfortune to lose our luggage, which contained our identification papers.

"Full up!" was the night porter's reply on our arrival there.

The cabby, however, at our request, drove us to another quiet hotel of the same class, and there the night porter informed us we could have a room, though he listened very suspiciously to our story of lost luggage and lost papers. He was inquisitive in the extreme, and when he had left our room, we looked at each other, and agreed that we should be very fortunate if we managed to leave the hotel without being arrested as suspected characters. Still, in for a penny in for a pound. There was nothing for it but to make the best of things.

After our prison beds, the clean white sheets and eider-downs were a wonderful treat, and we both slept well. We knew that it was the practice of the Berlin police to inspect hotel registers at eight o'clock each morning, and make inquiries about the different guests. We therefore arranged to be called early, on the pretext that we had to leave by train from a certain station. We took the precaution of giving the name of a station in quite a different part of the town from the station from which we actually intended to leave. We left the hotel about half-past seven in the morning, and after having written fictitious names and addresses in the hotel register, had a short conversation with the landlady, who asked us point-blank whether we were foreigners or not. We denied the horrid imputation, and assured her that we were German business men who had come on business to Berlin, and were unfit for military service. A young officer took breakfast at a neighbouring table in the dining-room and bowed to us as he entered. We asked for minute directions in order to get to the station from which we did *not* intend to travel, and, telling the landlady that we should, in all likelihood, be back again that night, and

that we should be obliged if she would reserve the same room for us, we left.

We went for a short distance in the direction in which she would expect us to go, and then, after waiting a long time for a tram, got one, full, apparently, of women clerks going to business. This tram took us again to the Zoological Gardens Station.

Keith, before we left the hotel in the morning, had found the luggage receipt in one of his pockets. This fact, coupled with the fact that we had managed to get away from the hotel without meeting the police, brought us one little ray of hope.

We realised that it was absolutely essential to get food of some kind. Ration cards we did not possess, and rationed articles we were, therefore, unable to buy. As practically everything was rationed, the only things which we were able to purchase were two pounds of chocolate creams at nine shillings a pound, and two small tins of sardines, which cost us four and six each. We had hoped to be able to buy nuts, but we could obtain them nowhere. We got our luggage, and at about half-past ten in the morning found ourselves on the platform of the Zoological Gardens Station, with second-class tickets for Hannover in our pockets. Our experience on the previous evening with a detective on that very station did not tend to make us feel very much at ease, though we were carrying one or two German newspapers, and I had also bought Captain König's recently published book, 'The Voyage of the Deutschland,' the story of his sensational trips across the Atlantic in the first German submarine merchantman.

We had intentionally taken tickets for a *Bummelzug* (slow train), in the belief that such a train would be less likely to be visited by detectives than an express corridor train, and I think we were correct in our surmise. The journey was a painfully slow one, and there were times when we seemed to be subjected to very close scrutiny by some of the other occupants of our compartment. At Stendal we had a long wait, and spent about an hour over a fairly decent meal of fish and vegetables, which we obtained without having to produce ration cards. While we were walking along the platform to our compartment in the train, we found ourselves at the tail-end of a column of about one hundred Russian military prisoners who were being transported by German guards to a village in the neighbourhood. They travelled by the same train, and I remember to this day my feeling of mingled exultation and compassion,—exultation at the thought that we had, for a brief spell at any rate, flung off our bonds, and compassion for the poor fellows who walked in front of us, cut off for the uncertain duration of the war from the land of their birth. With what glee those very guards would have marched us back to

prison had they only had the faintest notion of our identity! It was one of those amusing situations which could be enjoyed at the time. Most similar experiences are funny only in retrospect.

Whenever people entered our compartment, I was always either pretending to sleep or pretending to be very deeply engrossed in my book, which I read twice through. Keith later on pointed out to me with pardonable glee that I had bought a faulty copy, several chapters of the book appearing in duplicate. I had read the book twice from beginning to end without noticing this. My thoughts were centred upon other things than Captain König's adventures. Our own adventures were my chief concern.

On arrival in Hannover about 7 o'clock the same evening, we deposited our luggage at the railway station and went into the town. It was already dark, and we spent about an hour in the main streets making a few additional purchases, visiting cafés, and searching for a suitable hotel for the night. In a shop where we tried in vain to purchase a pair of boots for me, in place of my thin ones, two young Germans who came in eyed us very suspiciously, and Keith thought he saw them follow us and enter the same café. We immediately paid for our beer and, once in the crowded main street, we set out to throw them off the scent, zigzagging through quiet and crowded streets until we felt reasonably certain that they had lost sight of us.

Knowing quite well that the odds were dead against us, we were both of the opinion that it would be very nice, after recapture, should we fail in our enterprise, to have as many pleasant memories as possible to dwell upon in solitary confinement. What could be pleasanter than the sharp contrast between prison skilly and the memory of at least one good square meal? So, to a restaurant. We found Hannover's best in the St Georg Palast Restaurant, where we had a most excellent fish meal. The large room was full of elegant women and smart officers, in their pale-blue uniforms, Hannover being a centre where the *élite* of the cavalry officers of the German army are quartered. We ate, drank, and smoked, supremely at our ease by this time, and when an excellent string orchestra on a raised platform at the end of the room began to play light music, I had to take a very firm grip of myself in order not to blubber like a child. Heigh-ho! we were having a run for our money.

Late that night we went to our fifth-rate hotel, where no one asked to see our papers (though we were required to sign the registration book), and we asked to be called at an early hour the following morning. I gave myself a name which I thought would not be too difficult to pronounce, and quite enjoyed inventing occupation, birthday, the name of the place from which I had

come, and so on. One mistake I made, and remembered when it was too late, was to misspell the name of the town I chose as my place of residence.

When we were called the next morning, Keith, roused from sleep by the noise of some one knocking at the door, called out in English "Thank you!" which I tried to drown just in time with a very sleepy but fairly loud "*Danke schön!*"

At breakfast, the waiter was very insolent because we could not produce traveller's bread-cards, and it was difficult to know what attitude to take up towards him. An attitude of haughtiness on the one hand, or of obsequiousness on the other, might have ended in fatal consequences. We got out of the difficulty by telling him resignedly that we would do without bread altogether. He little knew!

Although we had no intention of leaving from the main station, we sent the porter to the cloak-room with our suit-case, and called for it about an hour later. The intervening time we spent in a park, the name of which I have forgotten, in the suburbs of the city. Then we took a tram to a suburban station named Hainholz, to the west of Hannover on the main line, and there booked to Osnabrück, I believe, by slow train, our intention being to book again there to Haltern, a small railway junction about twenty to twenty-five miles from the Dutch frontier. It was about ten o'clock when we left, and apart from long waits at certain stations *en route*, we were in the train until about seven o'clock in the evening. Captain König again rendered me yeoman service, and I am very grateful to the gallant gentleman.

At Minden, where we had a long wait, we wished to spend our time in the station buffet, and in order to reach it, had to pass through the barrier between the ticket collector and two German military police, who were examining papers. The presence of these military policemen made us very nervous, but we noticed that, like the "red-caps" in our own country, they had to do only with men in uniform, and when our turn came we passed by them quite safely. In the buffet we were served with a fine veal ragout and vegetables at a very low price, and no coupons were asked for. I mention this fact because I have often contended that food conditions in Berlin are not typical of food conditions throughout Germany, and in my opinion never will be. It is misleading in the extreme for a casual observer to generalise from what he has seen in Berlin. My experience is that food conditions vary very greatly throughout the whole empire, according to the favourable or unfavourable situation of the town in question, and also according to the efficient or inefficient administration of the particular district. Prophecies to the effect that Germany will collapse through starvation in a few weeks' or a few months' time

should be received with great caution, and inquiry should be made as to whether the prophet is generalising from one specific case, or really in a position to speak with authority on conditions as they actually are throughout *the whole* of Germany.

We arrived at Haltern, the station past Dülmen—a great distribution camp for military prisoners—about seven that evening, Keith having rebooked at Osnabrück without difficulty. Fortunately, quite a crowd of people was leaving the station as we passed through the barrier, I remaining some little way behind my chum, and following him at a distance along the dark road which led to the village.

Haltern had been more or less Hobson's choice. Among other things which we lost in losing our parcel in Berlin, was our map, and as Keith had taken this route on a previous occasion and found much to recommend it, we thought it better to trust to his remembering the landmarks, even by night, rather than gamble on a new and entirely unknown route. Luck had been dead against us all along the line. Everything that could possibly go wrong, short of recapture, had gone wrong; and when, in the train, we saw snow falling and felt the bitter cold, we knew that only the luck that carries men back to safety, after fighting a forlorn hope, could possibly carry us through. Still, we were in for it. There was no turning back. We resolved to do our best, and leave the rest to fate.

The night, as I have said, was bitterly cold. The road and paths beneath our feet were covered with sheet-ice, and it was difficult at times to prevent oneself from falling. We got to the centre of the village, and then came to a main road running due west, where I noticed a large sign, indicating that this was the road to Wesel. I still remained some distance behind my chum, who was walking ahead rapidly with the suitcase. When we came to the outer edge of the village, I noticed that a woman wearing a shawl passed him, going on her way from the country into the village, stared intently at him, went on, stopped again, turned round again, and continued to watch him for some seconds. Then she hurried on into the village. She took no notice of me. As soon as she had disappeared in the darkness, I rushed up to Keith and told him what had taken place, and said that I feared the woman had gone to the village to report the fact of our presence in the neighbourhood to the police. Fearing the possibility of immediate pursuit, we dashed from the highroad behind a broken hedge on our right, and flung ourselves flat in the wet grass among stones, turning up our coat-collars so as to hide our white collars and shirts. We lay there for some time, listening and quietly breathing. We heard nothing, and presently Keith arose and made for

the open country in what, I suppose, was a north-westerly direction, right through the fields which covered the rising ground. I was about to follow him, just as he was becoming lost to view in the darkness, when I heard footsteps coming in our direction along the path at the side of the road. It was too late to warn Keith, and in any case he was already out of sight of any one passing by us. I flung myself flat on my stomach, with my head in the direction of the approaching footsteps, and listened. It was evidently a man coming into the village, for I heard his heavy walk as he passed me at a distance of about three yards. In the meantime Keith had missed me, and had come back, whispering my name. I answered, joined him, and we again set out for the open country.

It was, as I have said, pitch-dark, and we had not gone a hundred yards before it commenced to rain. By that time we had reached a dry ditch, on one side of which was a ploughed field, at the summit of the slope. Beyond the ploughed field in a direction due west we could see the dim outline of a dark wood silhouetted against the sombre sky, and behind us, on the other side of the ditch, ran the stone wall of a cemetery. Here we began to pack our rucksacks. I was ready a little earlier than Keith, owing to the fact that he wished to strap his overcoat to his rucksack, instead of wearing it as I preferred to do. While he had been filling the pockets of the rucksacks with the chocolate creams we had bought in Berlin, I heard one or two chocolates fall into the ditch, and one or two into the open suit-case. Thinking that it was a pity to waste them, I began to fumble in the suit-case with my gloved hand, until I found what I thought was one of them. As far as I knew, the suit-case had been emptied. It was much too dark to see anything. There was no moon, and no stars were visible. In size and shape, something which I picked up from the suit-case resembled in every respect the chocolates which we had bought, and, after tearing off with my teeth part of the tinfoil which covered it, I took a bite and swallowed a portion before I had time to spit it out. I did not discover until much later in the evening exactly what it was that I had swallowed, though I felt quite sure it was not chocolate cream. I said nothing about the incident at the moment to Keith, attaching no importance whatsoever to it.

As soon as we were ready we set out to look for a certain road, running west, which Keith had taken on a former occasion. We spent about two hours looking for that road, walking across open country, stumbling across ploughed fields, smashing through the ice which covered ditches, tearing clothes on barbed wire, and sliding across lanes

covered with sheet-ice, at the bottom of deep cuttings. I knew that Keith was in very good condition, and I felt, for the first two hours or so, ready to face any physical fatigue.

In a certain steep cutting, with high banks and hedges on each side, we heard footsteps, and a man passed us in the dark, who, however, seemed more afraid of us than we were of him. He hurried on past us, and was soon lost to view in the darkness.

We had an exceedingly trying two hours, trying both to our nerves and temper, until we found the right road. In order to satisfy ourselves that it was the one we sought, we had to return to the cross-roads at the western edge of the village, in order to establish certain facts. Then we set out for the west.

Before we had gone very far, and as nearly as I can remember between eleven and twelve at night, I became painfully conscious of the fact that my strength was ebbing fast. I could not understand it, in view of the fact that I had felt so fit in the early part of the evening. We had had a fairly strenuous time searching for the right road, but we had done nothing that could explain the condition in which I began to find myself. Although I said nothing to my friend, he noticed that in spite of my efforts I was not able to keep up speed, and he anxiously questioned me about it. Feeling that my condition was perhaps after all due to my long term of imprisonment—I had had much longer in the Stadt Vogtei Prison than my friend—I thought it possible that I might be able to work it off; but try as I would, I soon found that this was impossible, and all my assurances that I should be all right soon failed to reassure my friend. We discovered quite accidentally at this stage that what I had actually eaten, in the belief that it was chocolate, was as a matter of fact *part of the end of a stick of Colgate's shaving soap!* I have since learned that it was a well-known dodge among regular soldiers in the British army in times of peace, when a man wanted to avoid taking part in night manœuvres, to swallow a tiny soap-pill, the effect of this on the action of the heart being of such a character that the man was invariably pronounced by the regimental doctor "temporarily unfit for service." Although I spat out as much as possible of the soap when I discovered it was not chocolate, I had nevertheless swallowed a certain amount, and most decidedly much more than a tiny pill. My legs and feet became almost like lead, and it was only with the utmost exertion that I was able to drag one foot behind the other. We were filled with consternation.

Our route lay for a time along a good road, which rapidly deteriorated and became simply an irregular line of very deep cart-ruts in clay and mud, which in a night had been frozen into stone. Snow lay upon the ground,

and over and over again I crashed through the film of ice which covered the ruts, stumbled, and fell. My friend dragged me up and urged me on. On we went again. My condition grew worse and worse. Presently we came to a part of the country where the landscape was entirely different from the country through which we had passed. Sometimes for about half a mile our way led through forest aisles, with tall and ghostly rows of pine and fir trees on either side.

A mixture of sleet and snow beat in our faces and froze on our hats and overcoats. Over and over again I sank down amidst the snow on the wayside, was helped up again by my friend, struggled on twenty or thirty yards, and fell down again, to repeat the same procedure a hundred times. The country grew wilder, and opened out into expanses of heath partially covered with stunted shrubs.

We came to four cross-roads, and chose one of them, after frequent consultations of the compass, but soon found, after we had gone about half a mile, that it led on to a wild and snow-covered desolate heath, which Keith was certain he had not crossed on his former escape. Seeing that his former escape had been undertaken in the spring, when the appearance of the country was entirely different, his ability in route-finding, with snow on the ground, and on such a night as this, I regard as nothing short of marvellous.

By this time, about half-past two in the morning—we had been tramping almost continuously since seven—I had to confess that I was "done." I was completely exhausted. He helped me back to the edge of the forest and bedded me on some broken twigs in the gloom of the pine-trees, while he went back to the cross-roads in order to see, with our last match, whether he could discover where we had gone wrong. I lay there motionless, with mingled feelings of disgust, heart-breaking disappointment, and an intense longing for sleep. How long I lay there I do not know. Keith returned after a time, and, as he told me later, thought I had died while he was away. He examined my pulse, and told me later that it was hardly perceptible, and very very slow.

Feeling that he ought to have the best possible chance, I pleaded with him to leave me there and go on alone. He would not hear of this, and turned down all my arguments. He helped me on to my feet and practically dragged me back to the cross-roads, carrying my rucksack as well as his own. There I sank into the snow again. He pointed out to me the road we should have taken; but we both realised that it was out of the question for us to go on, and we decided, after a short consultation, to return to a rickety straw-shed

which we had noticed near a farm, at a distance of about three miles from Haltern. It consisted of a straw-rick, covered by an open leaky roof supported by four corner-posts.

We chose the road which we thought was the right one, and painfully made our way along its deeply-rutted surface for a considerable distance, only to discover that it led us into unfamiliar country. We were wrong again. There was nothing for it but to retrace our steps. By this time my eyes were beginning to play me tricks, and I dimly remember swearing most volubly—not usually one of my many faults—as the thought came over me of all that our failure at the last lap would mean. Still, as I have often thought since, whenever, while in jail, we had indulged in calculations of our chances, we had always been most firmly of the opinion that we should have no prospect of success in attempting to cross the frontier when the landscape was white with snow. Two dark moving bodies on a white surface would present an ideal target for the frontier guards. Our plans also necessarily involved our spending a full day—from dawn till dusk—lying out in the open, and, unsatisfactorily furnished as we were with food and clothing, and with nothing in the way of stimulants, it is an open question whether we should have survived such an ordeal in our then state of health, or whether we should have been compelled, nearer the goal, to crawl to some habitation and give ourselves up to the people there. The gall, however, that tasted so bitterly at the time, was the thought that my breakdown had deprived the two of us of a sporting chance. I felt keenly for my friend, and my readers will place their own value upon the splendid way in which he stood by his chum.

To return: we found that we had gone wrong, and there was no alternative but to retrace our steps to the cross-roads. I am not quite sure, but I believe we took another wrong turning before we eventually struck the right road, and then, proceeding wearily along it, we came to the first cottage. We tried half-heartedly to knock up the people there, but receiving no response, I stumbled along, helped by Keith, to the straw-rick, which was our real objective. By means of a rickety ladder, two of whose rungs broke when we tried to use them, we climbed up into the straw, and all that I remember is lying there, convulsed every three or four seconds throughout the long night with shivers which shook every nerve in my body, constantly wet by the dripping snow from the roof, and too exhausted even to be able to cover myself with the straw which lay around me.

We got through the night somehow or other, and at about six or seven in the morning, heard below us the noise of some one walking in the farm-

yard. Keith climbed down the ladder and went to the farmhouse, to inform the people that we were two young Germans who had lost our way the previous night on the snow-covered heath, and had been forced to take refuge in their straw-rick. He came back shortly afterwards with the welcome news that the farmer's wife had requested him to take me into the kitchen, where we might sit by the fire and drink a cup of coffee which she would prepare for us. Painfully, and still trembling in every limb, I managed to climb down the ladder and hobble into the house. The goodwife and her young son and daughters received us quite kindly, and although we remained there more than an hour, and drank and ate the things they provided for us, they never seemed to doubt our story that we were Germans, who were not in the army because we were physically unfit for military service. The old lady told us of her soldier son, and when we left in order to return to Haltern Station, we paid her for the food, and for any damage for which we might have been responsible. I left Captain König's 'Voyage of the Deutschland' with the eldest daughter. I have often wondered since whether I shall ever have an opportunity of meeting these kind people again, and telling them the true story which lay behind that little incident.

I was feeling better, thanks perhaps to the coffee and food, but I recognised that it would be folly to attempt to lie up the whole day, in the condition in which I still found myself; and as we walked along the highroad, through beautiful snow-covered country, we discussed plans, and decided that we would return to Haltern Station and take tickets for a certain town in another part of Germany, where I thought we might be able to find a hiding-place, with a view to our lying up there until the snow had disappeared and I had completely recovered. Had fortune favoured us in carrying out this plan, we should, at a later date, have emerged from our hiding-place, and made another dash for the frontier. In spite of our heart-breaking disappointments, and our very slim chances of ultimate success, I was glad to be free, and remember how, with a feeling of intense gratitude, I walked along that country road, with pine-woods on either side crowning the snow-covered slopes; how my heart leapt at the sight of an occasional robin-redbreast, and how gladdened I felt at the sound of children's laughter. We got through the village safely, and arrived at the station. There we took tickets for a certain town, and as we were passing through the barrier, my friend asked the ticket-collector from which platform the train left. The man looked at us and said quite quietly—

"From over there, gentlemen! But you have time enough. You have more than ten minutes to spare. Why

not go into the waiting-room? You will be notified of the departure of the train."

"Thank you," we said, and turned to walk to the waiting-room, which, as soon as we entered, we discovered was not only the station buffet, but also the Army Headquarters for the village. A tall Lieutenant, in the smart green uniform of a Prussian Jäger Regiment, stood near the buffet, and, as we ordered coffee, we noticed to our dismay that the ticket-collector had followed us into the room and was engaged in conversation with the Lieutenant. They glanced several times in our direction, and before the waiter had time to bring our coffee, the Lieutenant came up to us, and, putting his hands on the table, and leaning over, said—

"*Wo kommen Sie her? Wo sind Ihre Papiere?* (Where do you come from? Where are your papers?)"

We looked at each other, made a sorry attempt to smile, saw in each other's eyes recognition of the fact that the game was up, and that bluff would serve us no longer. We admitted our identity.

"Corporal, take these two men across to the Guard-room!"

. . . . . .

Failed again!

(*To be continued.*)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE MRS GUMMIDGE OF THE EMPIRE—THE IRISH REBELLION—WHAT THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS—IRELAND'S TRUE GRIEVANCE—A BORN PARLIAMENTARIAN—MR HERBERT FISHER'S BILL—THE FUTURE OF THE "YOUNG PERSON"—THE SOUL OF THE NATION DESTROYED—MILITARY DRILL—THE REAL AIM OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION—AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PEPYS.

THE Irish, we are told, are always busily engaged in nursing a grievance. What that grievance is they have doubtless forgotten. It is some two centuries old, and was long ago atoned for. But there are some to whom the vague consciousness of a grievance is a necessity of life, and the Irish will doubtless enfeeble their mind and purpose by assuming an injury until the end of time. It matters not to them that the pretence of bearing an imaginary wrong with impatience is the plain mark of inferiority. If for a moment they were willing to renounce their love of complaint, they would be instantly recalled to their duty by a set of raucous agitators.

And though Ireland plays her chosen part as the Mrs Gummidge of the Empire—"I am a lone, lorn creetur, and everythink goes contrairy with me"—the British Government, in which Ireland has more than her fair share, with the generous gesture of Mr Peggotty, overwhelms her with benefits. Do her citizens want land? Millions are forthcoming from the British taxpayer, and Ireland, which always keeps an eye upon the main chance, accepts what is given her with a curse. "When we were not appealing to the British Government," says Mr George Russell (A.E.), "we were not idle with our prayers in other quarters. . . . We appealed to God, humanity, the United States, the Colonies, for pity, for sympathy, for dollars. We warned America that if she did not come to our rescue our national aspirations would die out, and the responsibility would be on her shoulders. One felt ashamed of the name of Irishman in the midst of all these tearful supplications. I received a letter once from an American friend who expressed a view which grows more and more popular in his country. 'Can't the Irish people do something except beg? Can they do nothing for themselves? Their policy isn't manly, and when I think of Joan of Arc I feel it isn't even womanly.'" They can do one other thing than beg: they can rebel when England is at war, and thus hamper

the partner whose benefits they receive. Indeed, ever since the war began, we have fought Ireland's battle as well as our own, and we have flattered her absurdly for each scrap of grudging help that she has given us. We have protected her with a careful hand against the necessary hardships of war. While we in England and Scotland limit our desires cheerfully, Ireland knows no restraint. She fleets the time pleasantly as in a golden age. If she has a fancy for whippet-coursing it is instantly gratified. Horse-races and cock-fights are provided her to mitigate the dulness of life. She knows not the tedium of rations nor the lack of petrol. Her rebels have been permitted to make their triumphal progresses in costly motor-cars. And hitherto travelling by railroad has not been discouraged by the imposition of higher fares.

What has Ireland given us in exchange for these many privileges?—rebellion, malice, and murder. England has a short memory, and is too careless to nurse a grievance; but Easter Day is not yet quite forgotten—that day on which the Irish chose to show their "power" and "patriotism" by killing English soldiers in cold blood and by taking pot-shots at harmless citizens. And even that diversion was permitted them. The handful which the Government arrested was presently enlarged and tricked out in new suits. And this brings us to the one solid grievance of Ireland: she needs to be governed firmly and justly, and our politicians are as much afraid of justice as of firmness. They forget that a country cannot be made happy by a policy of all rewards and no punishments. Messrs George and Duke did but carry on the baleful policy of Messrs Asquith and Birrell. They made themselves, by their neglect, the partners of rebellion; and even when they made a show of force, they did not mean it.

After the German offensive in March, Mr Lloyd George introduced, all too late, a man-power bill, and he spoke proudly of the measure of conscription which he would impose, justly and properly, upon Ireland. We, like many others, were duped by the tone of his speech into believing him sincere. From that day to this nothing more has been heard, on the Government's part at least, of Irish conscription. We have merely been the witnesses of what inevitably happens. We have seen resumed, in one episode, the whole history of Ireland. On the side of the Government there have been bluster and timidity. It promised a miracle of fortitude, and it collapsed in fear. On the side of Ireland there have been anger, malice, and renewed rebellion. The bishops of the Roman Catholic Church threw themselves wildly into the fray, assured us that not one single Irishman should be taken to fight against Germany, and

proved once more how dangerous a thing it is to tolerate an *imperium in imperio*. Meanwhile, conscription was quietly and privately dropped. A little later the familiar policy of brimstone and treacle was publicly administered. It was announced that the Government had evidence of German plots in Ireland, and a large number of rebels, who never should have been permitted to be at liberty, were arrested. Such was the brimstone. The treacle was added in the shape of a hint that volunteers would be welcomed. By these means an appearance of strength was given to what was in reality an abject surrender. That there had been German plots in Ireland since the outbreak of the war was generally known; the Easter Day rebellion and the trial of the monstrous Casement had abundantly confirmed the gravest suspicions; and the statement issued by the Government has not done much more than fill the details in a well-known outline, and to kill conscription.

With a proper reticence the Government makes no more than a summary of the events since the Irish Rebellion of 1916. "A full statement," we are told, "of the facts and documents in possession of the Government would disclose the names of those who stood by the Government, and also the channels of communication through which the German Government was acting, which it would not be in the public interest to reveal at present." That is very right and proper. And the story that is told of what happened before the black Easter Day is interesting enough of itself to be put upon record. It is told in the proper style of conspirators, and all the actors in the plot are those whose names we expect to find upon the traitorous roll. The mischief began as early as November 1914, when Casement, now idolised by the foolish as a martyred poet, sent a message through Herr Zimmerman to Count Bernstorff, asking that a messenger, a native-born American if possible, should be sent to Ireland with the word that all was favourable. He was to carry with him no compromising letter, and no doubt he delivered his message with satisfactory results to the rebels, whom British Ministers have covered with an amiable flattery. And this was not the end of Casement's demands. He asked also for an Irish priest, who should work in the prison camps of Germany, and corrupt the Irish prisoners of war. This joyous instrument of evil was also furnished in the person of Father John T. Nicholson, who arrived safely in Germany to do his dirty work, and who lost no time in sending messages of encouragement to America.

Thus the train was laid, and by 1916 all was ready for the explosion. The messenger who had been sent to Ireland without a letter had had an excellent effect there, as we should

expect. In a despatch of February 1916 Count Bernstorff made a grateful acknowledgment, and included also an extract from a report of John Devoy, the head of the Clan-na-Gael, saying that the rebellion could not long be postponed since the leaders feared arrest. Mr Devoy, it appears, was ignorant of the general pusillanimity of the British Government. However, he declared that it was decided to begin the fight on Easter Sunday, and he begged that arms and ammunitions should be delivered in Limerick. Herr von Jagow promised that the arms should be landed at the proper time in Tralee Bay. He likewise promised, as the complaisant gentleman he is, that an air raid and a naval attack should be delivered in England between April 24 and 26, and this part of the bargain was duly kept. The other part of the bargain—the landing of arms—failed miserably, despite the liberal use of codes and of the private wireless stations which Ireland is permitted to install without let or hindrance. However, the rebellion came, as we all know, on Easter Monday, a day after the scheduled time. The Irish volunteers were in close communication with the German Government, and upon which of the two well-matched parties lies the burden of failure we need not inquire. At any rate, the Irish rebels had done their best to show their gratitude for the Wyndham Act.

The failure of the Easter Revolution did not damp their ardour. The plottings with Germany never ceased. The Revolution Director still insisted that the rising must be contingent on the sending by Germany of "an expedition with a sufficient military force to cover the landing." It was also proposed that submarine and Zeppelin bases should be established on the West of Ireland. Herr Zimmermann was obliged to refuse the aid of German troops, but he promised that a supply of arms should be landed between February 21st and 25th, 1917. Meanwhile, a stalwart Nationalist, who bears the good old Erse name of de Valera, was carrying the fiery cross up and down Ireland. "By properly organising recruiting," said he, "they could have 500,000 fighting volunteers in Ireland." But he saw no chance of success in the near future, except through a German invasion and the landing of munitions in Ireland. "They should be prepared to leave nothing undone towards that end." And six months ago the same traitor announced that "so long as Germany is the enemy of England, and England the enemy of Ireland, so long will Ireland be the friend of Germany." The Government, which knew perfectly well what the man was doing and saying, left him at liberty—a piece of reckless levity which needs no comment.

Indeed the Government cannot shelter itself at any time

behind ignorance. Its information was accurate, and it seems to have followed the movements of the traitors with a detached curiosity. "The British authorities," we are told, "were able to warn the Irish Command regarding the probable landing of an agent from Germany from a submarine. The agent actually landed on April 12, and was arrested." That the agent landed is not remarkable. We cannot but be surprised that the British Government had the temerity to arrest him. However, what is plain is that the Sinn Feiners have for four years fought for Germany with all means in their power. They have aided in the establishment of submarine bases in Ireland, and have done their best to connive at the destruction of American transports. In the past they have condescended to accept whatever money America has been kind enough to send them, and no doubt they are proud of the currency in which they pay the debt.

At last, then, the chief stirrers-up of rebellion are under lock and key; and it is characteristic of the British Government that it should assume a half-apologetic tone in announcing its desperate action. "In these circumstances," to quote the official statement, "no other course was open to the Government, if useless bloodshed was to be avoided and its duty to the Allies to be fulfilled, but to intern the authors and abettors of this criminal intrigue." What an excellent phrase it is—"if useless bloodshed was to be avoided"! Is it possible to imagine a Government which did not count the avoidance of useless bloodshed among its duties? But where Ireland is concerned, the duty of Governments is obviously suspended. For four years the rebels in Ireland have conspired with Germany in the full light of day, and, except for a brief interval in prison, they have conspired without restraint or interference. Even now we are not told that the scoundrels, at last interned, will ever be brought to trial for their misdeeds. As they are Irish, they will probably be dismissed to their homes in nice new suits of clothes, entertained as heroes upon the Terrace of the House of Commons, or welcomed to Westminster as honoured members of our Legislature. And Ireland is said to have a grievance!

The interned ones themselves have long ago been fitted with appropriate haloes. It is certain that every morning they gaze at their "intellectual" faces in the glass, and see the reflection of unselfish martyrdom. It is not for them to condemn treachery and dishonour. Nothing is sacred to them but their own silly egoism. And their silly egoism persuades them to demand that loyal Ulster should be placed beneath their heels. If justice be done after the war, the plain truth will be told that the rebels and their

supporters are unfit to exercise a parliamentary vote of any kind, whether their elect sit in Dublin or in Westminster. Let them go to Berlin if they like, and be bullied by their friends. If we are wise, we shall not tolerate their interference in the government of Great Britain for many years to come.

It is noteworthy, also, that no protest has come from Nationalist Ireland against the treachery of the Sinn Feiners. Whether the leaders of the Nationalist party were cognisant of Mr de Valera's action or not we do not know. They have not raised their voices in disapproval; with the extreme views of Sinn Fein they have openly sympathised. And if the Nationalist party is silent, the British Government is still irresolute and conciliatory. Having abandoned conscription, having appealed unsuccessfully for volunteers, it now comes forward with an offer and a bribe. Henceforth the rural population may regard itself as not "available for military purposes"; but if 50,000 heroic souls, gathered from "the large number of young men in the towns, far greater than is required to carry on the ordinary retail trade," will kindly come forward, they are assured that they need not go back to their counters after the war: each one of them shall receive a grant of land. Such is the last act in the tragic farce of Ireland. Why the number, 50,000, was chosen is not explained. It bears no relation either to Ireland's capacity of finding soldiers or to the needs of our army. Valera boasted that he could raise 500,000 men, and it is indeed a poor compliment to Ireland to take it for granted firstly that only one-tenth of her manhood is ready to fight against the Germans, and that even this modest number will not come forward unless a sufficient reward is offered. Thus is the carrot dangled before the nose of the donkey, and yet he won't run!

Yet, as we have said, Ireland has a grievance, and this grievance is that for twelve years she has not known the benefit of any kind of government. She has been free to conspire and to rebel as she pleases, and she has exercised this freedom to the full. Our politicians have looked upon the plots, which are not concealed from them, with a complaisant tolerance, and they must share the responsibility with Sinn Fein. A little firmness four years ago, when the treachery began, might have saved much "useless bloodshed," which hypothetically the Government is willing to avoid. But there was and there is no sign of firmness. Since March the Government has decreed conscription, has appealed for volunteers, has bribed 50,000 men with offers of land, and perhaps next week it will gratefully place a coronet upon the head of each recruit. Only one advantage has come from the Government's pusillanimity: it is now

clear to all the world that Ireland is not a poor down-trodden creature, deprived by a base Saxon Government of joy and freedom. Rather is it overloaded with comforts and privileges, exempt from all the restraints and hardships of war, and promised the highest rewards for small acts of condescension.

So long as the war lasts, Ireland, from its own point of view, will have nothing to complain of. No gratification is denied it, except the gratification of commerce with the enemy. But after the war? How will Ireland stand then? In neglect of its duty it will stand almost alone. It will have no single rival in rebellion and in trafficking with the Germans. Of course, its own egoism will protect it from any self-reproach. In its own blinded eyes it will still appear the injured innocent of the world. The question it will be forced to ask and answer is: How will Ireland appear in the eyes of others? It will be friendless and alone. Its amiable allies, the Germans, will be powerless, even if they are willing, to help. Not only has it forfeited the sympathy of America by its misdeeds; it is now avenging itself upon its former friend with flouts and gibes. "After all," says the 'Freeman's Journal,' "when all is said and done, Ireland was in the war while America was hesitating." The boast and the taunt are alike unmerited. The 'Freeman's Journal' does not point out that Ireland did not go very far into the war, but did go very far into a traitorous commerce with Germany. Such, then, will be Ireland's bitter memory—to have conspired with the common enemy and to have failed.

Mr Herbert Fisher was recently described as a "born Parliamentarian." The compliment, wholly deserved, can have given him but little pleasure. Parliamentarians are not very popular just now, and it is doubtful whether they merited much praise at any time. To be a Parliamentarian is to know how to press a measure through the House whatever be the measure's design and purpose, to be able to drive a sufficient number of members into the useful lobby, to possess the sophist's trick of making any cause you like to appear the just cause. All these things Mr Fisher has succeeded in doing, and we suppose that his Education Bill will pass into an Act of Parliament with as little delay as possible. And Mr Fisher has proved himself a true Parliamentarian in adaptability as well as in persuasiveness. We are told that if a man, unaccustomed to business, goes into the city in middle life, he outdoes in astuteness and cunning those who have grown up in the tradition of commerce. So Mr Fisher, who has spent many years in the wise seclusion of Oxford, swiftly goes beyond his colleagues in all the arts of the

politician. His Education Bill is the bill of a politician, not of a statesman. It was certainly born in a department, and has already lived an inglorious life of some years in the dust of an office. Then some permanent official, knowing that Mr Fisher was in want of a bill, washed the face of the poor foundling, furbished him up as well as possible, and gave the Minister a chance of conferring, as we are told, a greater benefit upon the world than it has known since 1870.

But is it of such a great benefit after all? It is true that it achieves many ends which seem desirable to-day. It will enormously increase the power of a public department; it will call into being thousands of inspectors and overseers; and it will invent a new set of crimes, which hitherto have escaped the eye of justice. Henceforth any poor boy or girl who, after the age of fourteen, refuses to receive the palatial benefits of what the State calls education, will be fined the sum of £1 for a second offence. Who is expected to pay the money we do not know. The parents will be charged only if they are guilty of connivance. But if the alternative to a fine is a term of imprisonment, then we may expect to see our jails constantly full, and may wonder piously at the might and ingenuity of the British Government.

What is offered as compensation for the new crime and the new punishment we do not yet know. We are told the number of hours assigned to the compulsory process of education. What is to be done in those hours is still a profound secret. Who shall choose the subjects to be dealt with? Shall the enforced student be permitted to select for himself what he desires to study, or shall he be obliged to follow the taste and fancy of others? Probably, as a sort of sanctity hangs about a ballot-box—as the only virtue known to democracy is the virtue of numbers—the poor victims will be invited to vote; and since minorities have no rights, forty-nine will be obliged to learn what is distasteful to them, if fifty-one insist upon it. But however the problem be solved, we cannot believe that every boy and every girl will ever be free to choose his own method of study and his own teacher. That would be too costly an operation to be lightly undertaken even by those who are desirous of purchasing votes. And how shall the new Act be applied in the remoter villages? In towns some sort of a makeshift may be devised which shall persuade the masses that education is being handed out to them as a useful commodity. But in a village which contains (let us say) twenty "young persons" ripe for the continuation school, the method of training will not be easy. To satisfy their needs some twenty teachers might be necessary, and these even the zeal of the local authority would be powerless to provide.

Probably the Act will end

in a series of what used to be called "penny readings," with magic-lantern slides—an ingenious method of pretending to teach without much trouble, and of safeguarding the "young persons" against any risk of mental discipline. But what is also of great importance is that we should know the purpose of Mr Fisher's new scheme. Does the Government desire to increase the commercial value of our "young persons," to make them what is called in the jargon of politics a "useful asset," or does it cherish a love of education for its own sake? If national assets are our aim, the only kind of education which will be worth the money will be strictly technical. The "young persons" of England will be brought up upon a uniform plan, like so many little Huns, and if they do not serve the State efficiently they will be regarded as waste products. And whether they succeed or fail, the process of their education will have done much to abolish that diversity of talent and temper which has always been the boast of England. We shall have our men and women cast to pattern, warranted to earn high wages and to vote as they are told. But we shall not look to them for surprise or invention. The soul of a part of the nation will be destroyed to satisfy the politicians.

If we are aiming at education for its own sake—the only aim worth attaining—Mr Fisher's bill is likely to fail also. Education, in this, the only true sense, is not good for everybody, and it can be forced upon all and sundry only with a vast waste of time and money. There are many thousands, in all classes, who rebel sturdily against education of any kind. They are not worse or better than others. Sincere in their dislike of books and all that books mean, they would be far more wisely employed working in the fields or in workshops—in using their hands, not their heads. No good can come of sending them to school until they are sixteen or eighteen, at the public expense, and no Act can hope to succeed which does not admit this obvious diversity of types. Indeed, the only sound education is that which a man gives himself, and that must come always not by compulsion but by free will. Nor is there anybody less competent to give it, or to suggest how it shall be given, than a Government Department, and we can only pity the sad "young persons" mentioned in the bill, some of whom will have education forced upon them, though they hate it, while others, genuinely desirous to educate themselves, will find that they are fobbed off compulsorily with a sample of learning concocted in an office, and duly inspected by obedient officials.

There should be, moreover, a limit set to what is provided freely by the state. If all our "young persons" are to be educated for their own pleasure, then it should be

understood that they do some sort of national service in return. In the public schools there is not the smallest show of reluctance to serve the country. The O.T.C. is of universal acceptance. But what is good enough for the boys of Eton and Harrow is held to be disastrous for the boys who attend elementary schools. The mere hint that it is sweet and comely to fight for their country must be kept from these tender spirits. With incredible carelessness Mr Fisher had given the local education authority "power to include in their schemes military training or drill for young persons between the ages of 14 and 18, who would be compulsorily required to attend continuation schools." We have been four years at war. We should by this time have learned that it is not wholly useless for boys to acquire some knowledge of military drill. We should not have been so long in beating the Germans if military drill had been permitted in our schools. After all, there is nothing disgraceful in learning the rudiments of defence and attack. As a member of the House was bold enough to assert, "the training of Boy Scouts is distinctly a form of military training." But the Boy Scouts are nothing to the Government, and Mr Fisher refused to be led away by an evil example. So he gave "a satisfactory assurance that there was no desire on the part of the Government to introduce compulsory military training into continuation schools." We are easily persuaded to believe this, and we hope, for the sake of the scrupulous Government, that it will never be whispered in the ear of the "young persons" that England has been at war.

There also Mr Fisher proved himself a born parliamentarian. A man who believes "it would be unfortunate if it should be thought that the Government were attempting to introduce anything like compulsory military training into our schools" might have been born and bred in the House of Commons. We hope that he will carry his scruple a step further, and insist that his teachers should speak always of Swedish exercises, not of Swedish drill. The word "drill" savours of militarism, and if the boys and girls, who are born into the world for the sole purpose of voting at the proper time and on the right side, accustomed their ears to the sound of so dangerous a word as "drill," it is dimly possible that the next war might find us not wholly unprepared. The democracy might even become interested in national defence, and then not even Viscount Haldane would be able to withstand its clamour. However, all's well that ends well, and our young democrats of both sexes will be as closely guarded against the contamination of military drill and "Chauvinism," its natural result, as though they were conscientious objectors.

Henceforth, then, from the age of five to fourteen wholly, and partially from the age of fourteen to eighteen, the children of the working classes will belong to the State. They will be fed and taught as the State wills, and if only they were put into uniform they might as well be living in reformatories. That the working classes should approve of this servile policy is astonishing enough, and yet they appear to support Mr Fisher's Bill with a whole heart. Now the basis of every strong State is the family, and it is the family and the responsibility which it brings with it that the Government has set itself to destroy. Nor is the paradox mitigated by the reflection that at the very moment when they declare themselves ready to give up their children of five years of age to the public custody, the working classes demand to take into their own hands the sole and undivided government of the Empire. How shall a man rule a great State who declines to manage his own household? How shall we dare to talk of freedom when we have put into the chains of a compulsory and undefined system of education all the "young persons" in the land?

And education, thus freely given, must be paid for, and here we are faced by a second injustice. The bulk of the money, which will be spent upon the training of the children of the working classes, must be wrung from the middle class, upon which taxation falls most heavily. The result will be that the middle class will find the education of its own children, which it has always undertaken itself, increasingly difficult. And this difficulty is the more to be deplored, because from the middle class, independent and self-supporting as it is, comes much of the best talent and the best intelligence of the country. This hardship cannot be exaggerated. The middle class, often worse paid than the working class, which rules us to-day by force of numbers, will be asked to pay for the education of children whose parents are perfectly well able to pay for it themselves. Thus the burden will be put upon the wrong shoulders; the continuation schools will be supported by those who do not frequent them; and the best profit that the country can hope to extract from them will be the fines levied upon the young defaulters, five shillings for the first, and a pound for any subsequent offence.

Nor is the Education Department likely to stay its hand at the continuation schools. Its aim is nothing less than to take hold of all the schools and universities in the land. All the parents in England are to be dragooned as the working classes wish to be dragooned to-day. The House of Commons has passed a clause which will prevent a parent from sending his sons to any school which the Board of Education does not deem efficient. Eton or Harrow or

Charterhouse may easily fall under the ban, and few will believe the Board of Education are fair judges of efficiency. The strength of England in the past has been that she has had schools and universities of many types. Thus we have found men who could perform the widely differing duties imposed by the governance of a large empire. If the ambition of the Board of Education be not checked we shall all be shaped and inspected to a single pattern. We shall all learn the same thing at the same hour, and be fit only to obey the unreasonable behests of a nicely engineered majority. We shall think alike and act alike, and instead of going and coming freely as we please, we shall be packed into whitewashed buildings provided by the Government, and there we shall sit, like Peter Bell's party, "all silent and all damned."

The 'Memoirs of William Hickey,' of which a second volume has just been published (London: Hurst & Blackett), deserve more careful editing than they have received. We have a right to be told something more about their ingenious author than the editor has told us. We have a right to ask precise questions about the manuscript, whose pedigree apparently goes back only to 1865, and to see a specimen reproduced in facsimile. As it is, an air of mystery pervades the book, and a little explanation might have dispelled it. However, we must e'en take it as it comes, and admit that William Hickey was an engaging ruffian, who has earned our gratitude by painting a portrait of himself in which nothing is sacrificed to diffidence or modesty.

He wrote his memoirs long after the events which they chronicle, and they lack the precision of a journal kept from day to day. Otherwise we might describe Hickey as a Pepys of the eighteenth century. He has something of Pepys's candour and Pepys's lack of self-consciousness. He gives himself away with the same light-heartedness wherewith he gives away his friends. His standard of honour is not high, and he makes no pretence that he is any better than he is. He steals money from his respectable father, a friend of Burke, and the "blunt, pleasant creature" of Goldsmith's 'Retaliation,' as gladly as he robs his friend of his mistress. Throughout his life he kept the worst of good company, and was most intimately at home in the taverns and gambling-hells of London. Drury Lane was his favourite quarter, though in later years he did not disdain the masquerades which Mme. Cornelys arranged in Soho Square. And though, when he chose his own companions, they were rather cheerful than wise, fortune threw him continually among the great. His book contains sketches — the more valuable

perhaps because they appear to be drawn without intention —of Burke and Francis and Warren Hastings, and many another distinguished or notorious statesman. And Hickey is no hero-worshipper. He bends the knee to nobody. Whoever it be that crosses his path, he meets him upon equal terms, and keeps himself ingenuously in the centre of the picture, as though he was rather conferring than accepting a favour. He has all the lighter vices. He is raffish, rowdy, extravagant, unscrupulous in money and in love, and yet he defies the censor in his book as he defied most censors, except that "special attorney," his father, during his life.

It is characteristic of him that, as he sat down in middle age to compose his 'Memoirs,' he remembered with the greatest pride and vividness his triumphs with the bottle. Never once was he unresponsive to the challenge. He would drink with any one who was ready to sit late and to drink deep. In his hot youth champagne and burgundy seem to have caught his palate. Grown to manhood, he preferred claret, and if we numbered the bottles which he says that he drank in his second volume, the result would be astonishing. If he falls in the encounter, he confesses defeat like a man. He speaks almost as tenderly of the headaches, the proper consequence of his debauches, as of the debauches themselves. Nor is he careful always to select the companions of his revels. If we may believe Hickey, Henry Mordaunt, my Lord Peterborough's brother, was an unredeemed scoundrel, mad, brutal, and unscrupulous; yet Hickey, who hated him, could no more easily avoid his society than Mordaunt could avoid the society of Hickey, whom he cordially detested, and who at last carried off from him the beautiful Charlotte Barry. Truly, the bottle which makes odd companions never brought together an odder couple than William Hickey and Henry Mordaunt.

In the second volume of his 'Memoirs' Hickey carries his reader abroad with him to the West and East Indies. And if he changes his sky he does not change his mind. The hottest climate neither checks his zest of life nor moderates his appetites. The pursuit of law, which seems in India to have been profitable enough, was but an interlude in his life of busy amusement. And yet he finds time to paint, after his summary fashion, the great men whom he encountered. He speaks familiarly of Hastings and Impey. He agrees with the rest of the world that Francis was a pompous fellow, the more readily because he replied to Burke's letter of introduction that the idea "of his ever having it in his power to be useful to an attorney" was ridiculous; and he notes with pleasure the litigation in which Francis was involved with George Francis Grand, the husband of a famous lady, to

whom Francis was attached, and whom Talleyrand presently married by order of Napoleon. Yet he never takes us very far or very deep into affairs of State, which are, in his eyes, mere interruptions to the proper business of life. No sooner had he made a comfortable sum of money than he hastened home to spend it in London, and he takes leave of us at Lisbon, on his way back to India, where he hoped that pleasure and the rupee would still await him. So we look forward to a third volume of these entertaining 'Memoirs' with curiosity, and our debt to the editor will be increased if, as we have suggested, he describe more clearly the history of the manuscript and throw a little more light upon the life and character of its author.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.